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# FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

**LONG & CO., BOY BROKERS**

*By A SELF-MADE MAN.*

**COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE**



Johnny looked at the box a moment and then threw up the cover. A cloud of stifling smoke rose, like a balloon, out of it. "Great Scott!" exclaimed Johnny. "What is this?" The others in the room started back aghast.

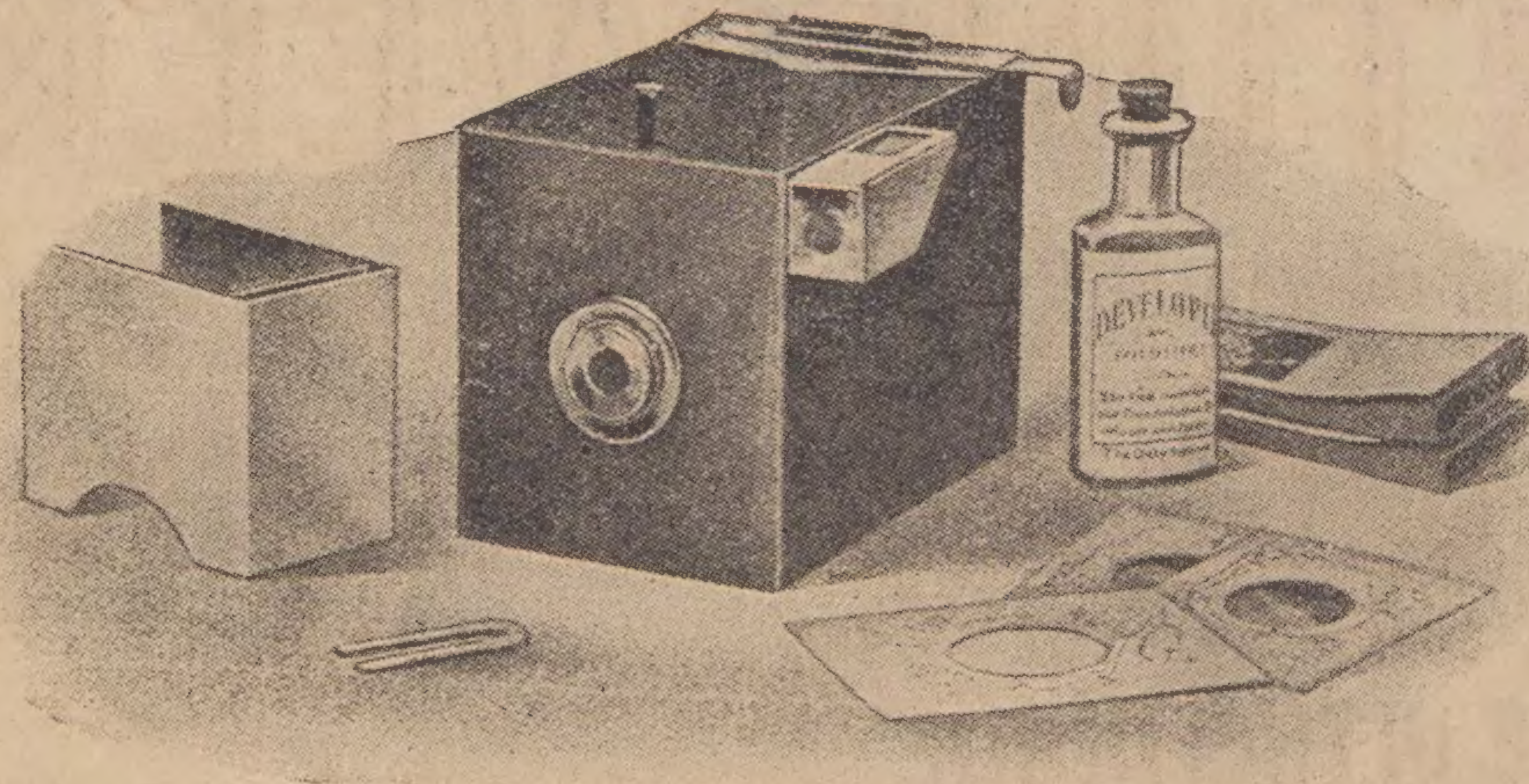


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# Fame and Fortune Weekly

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 24, 1911.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

# Long & Co., Boy Brokers

OR,

## A LUCKY WALL STREET FIRM

By A SELF-MADE MAN

### CHAPTER I.

#### A SAFE AND ITS CONTENTS.

"And now, gentlemen, I will take your bids on this fine steel safe and its contents," said the auctioneer, looking at the crowd which was gathered in a semi-circle around him, several deep. "It is the last lot in the programme."

"Contents!" exclaimed a man in the front row. "What do you mean by that?"

"When I say contents I naturally mean whatever is in it," replied the auctioneer, suavely.

"Well, what's in it? Gold dollars or old junk?"

The crowd laughed at this sally.

"That's a chance you bidders have to take."

"Why, that's bidding on a pig in a poke," said the man. "This wasn't advertised as a sale of unclaimed property like the express companies hold once a year."

"I am sorry, sir, but I am merely following my instructions, which was to offer this safe and contents for sale as it stands," explained the auctioneer.

"I guess the contents don't amount to a hill of beans," said the man. "I'll give twenty dollars."

"I am offered twenty dollars for this fine steel safe, which is practically as good as new, and cost \$150 a year or so ago. Twenty dollars, do I hear thirty?"

"Twenty-five," said another man.

"Thirty," raised the first bidder.

"Thirty-one," put in a third bidder.

There was a momentary pause.

"Thirty-one has been offered for this safe and its contents. Why, gentlemen, the safe itself is worth easily three times that figure. I guarantee this safe to be in first-class condition, in every respect," said the auctioneer.

That endorsement brought two bids of thirty-five and forty dollars, and then there was another pause.

"Forty dollars I am offered, do I hear forty-five? Gentlemen, the contents of this safe may be worth ten times forty dollars," said the auctioneer.

"Do you guarantee that, too?" asked the original bidder.

"Certainly not," said the auctioneer, hastily. "I don't guarantee the contents at all."

There was no further bid, though the auctioneer tried hard to raise the last offer another dollar.

At this point a well-dressed gentleman, who had been standing behind him, stepped up and whispered something in his ear.

"Gentlemen," said the auctioneer, "I have been instructed to tell you that the contents of this safe largely consists of mining and industrial stock. The reason it is offered with the safe and not in separate lots is because the deceased, whose property it was, left a request in writing that when his personal belongings in this office were sold that the safe be offered just as it stood at the moment of his untimely death. Now, gentlemen, I hope you will make a bid in keeping with the chances you have of drawing a prize. I'll guarantee the safe to be worth a hundred dollars. The contents may be worth a hundred thousand for all I know. It is possible I am offering you a fortune in disguise. I have been offered forty dollars. Who will say seventy-five?"

While the chances were that the certificates of stock, now admitted to form the contents of the safe, were of little, if any, value, the element of uncertainty injected more than ever into the proceedings brought forth bids of forty-five to sixty-five dollars, and then stopped again.

"Sixty-five dollars, gentlemen, is a mere bagatelle to offer for the chance of a small fortune," said the auctioneer, in persuasive tones. "The safe is worth more than that, and you are taking no risk whatever on the contents, even if the shares of stock are not worth the paper they are written on. Come, gentlemen, do not let what may be



a good thing get away from you. Do I hear seventy-five dollars?"

"All he heard was an offer of sixty-six."

"Sixty-six. It is really a shame to let this lot go at such a ridiculously low figure. Sixty-six, do I hear sixty-seven?"

Nobody seemed eager to raise the last bid.

The bidder was a second-hand furniture man, who had already bought most of the furniture and other office fixtures.

"Sixty-six, do I hear sixty-seven?" said the auctioneer, looking around.

At that moment a bright-looking boy hurriedly entered the room and began pushing himself to the front.

"Sixty-six dollars for this fine safe and its contents. It is really a sacrifice. Sixty-six, once; sixty-six, twice—gentlemen, this is your last chance—your last opportunity for a possible fortune. Sixty-six——"

The auctioneer paused, as auctioneers do before knocking a lot down.

"Sixty-seven!" cried a clear boyish voice.

The crowd turned and looked at the new bidder.

He was a well-built, handsome lad, with a face full of energy and resolution—a boy who would attract favorable notice anywhere.

His face was flushed, either from exercise or subdued excitement, and his eyes sparkled with animation.

"Young man," said the auctioneer, "did you say sixty-seven dollars for this safe and its unknown contents?"

"I did," replied the boy.

"Who are you bidding for?"

"Myself."

"The terms of this sale are spot cash, and the goods must be removed before noon to-morrow."

"All right. I said sixty-seven."

"Sixty-eight," said the second-hand man.

"Sixty-nine," said the boy.

"Seventy," said the dealer.

"Seventy-five," said the boy.

The crowd was now much interested in the rival bidders, particularly in the boy who had come in late.

They wondered what he wanted the safe for.

The gentleman behind the auctioneer, who had given the boy a searching look, whispered something to the auctioneer, which caused him to look hard at the lad.

"I am offered seventy-five dollars, but I am instructed to say that unless a hundred dollars is offered it will be withdrawn from the sale."

That settled the second-hand man, and he started to leave the place he had occupied.

"I'll make it a hundred, then," said the boy, promptly.

Some man in the crowd suddenly got an idea in his head that the boy knew something about the contents of the safe, and he offered \$105.

The boy laughed.

"You're an easy mark," he said, and he made a bluff of leaving his place.

The man then seemed to realize that the boy was merely a kind of capper, employed to raise the bidding as high as possible.

"Gentlemen," said the auctioneer, "I am offered one hundred and five——"

"Hold on there," said the last bidder, "I'll withdraw my bid. I find that I haven't the money to pay for the safe at that price."

The auctioneer looked disappointed and said something sarcastic.

"Young man, your bid of one hundred dollars stands, unless you want to draw out, too," he said.

"All right, sir. I'll stand by it."

"You've got the money, have you?"

"Did you ask that question of any other bidder?" replied the boy, tartly.

"No; but you're only a boy——"

"So were you once."

The crowd snickered.

"My young friend——"

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I'm not your friend, young or otherwise. Please confine yourself to facts."

This raised a general laugh at the auctioneer's expense.

"Young man, I wish to know if you are prepared to pay for this safe if it is knocked down to you?" said the auctioneer, severely.

"Yes, sir, I am prepared to pay for it," replied the boy. "Any more questions? I have lots of time."

"Gentlemen, are you going to let this boy do you out of a good thing? Aren't you going to raise his bid five or ten dollars? That's an uncommonly smart boy, gentlemen. Look at his head. It is the head of a budding financier. Who knows but one of these days he'll be one of our Wall Street magnates?"

The auctioneer was evidently disposed to be funny.

Probably his method of getting back at the lad who had rapped him.

The boy didn't seem to mind it, for he never turned a hair.

"That boy has brains, gentlemen," went on the auctioneer. "He sees this opportunity which you are letting get by you. He is getting a hundred-and-fifty-dollar safe for one hundred dollars, and the possibility of a fortune thrown in. Are you going to let a clever boy outbid you?"

Evidently the crowd were, for nobody offered a fresh bid.

"Very well, gentlemen, the loss is yours. One hundred dollars once—twice—and for the third and last time."

The auctioneer looked around, then brought his hands together with a resounding smack as he said, "sold!"

"I wonder which is sold—the safe or the bidder," said a man, facetiously.

"I'll tell you," said the boy, "the gentleman who let me bluff him out of his bid. I've got a bargain."

"How do you know you have?"

"That's one of my business secrets," replied the boy, in a chipper way.

"Step up and settle, young man," said the auctioneer.

The boy stepped up and handed in five \$20 notes, and asked for a bill of sale.

"Say, do you know who that chap is?" said the man who had just come in and heard that the boy had bought the safe and its contents on the go-it-blind principle.

"No, who is he?" asked the sarcastic man.

"That's Johnny Long, the late Mr. Jackson's messenger. He and the deceased were quite thick. The old man said Long was the smartest messenger in the Street, and I guess he was right. If anybody has a correct idea what is in that safe he has, and you can take my word that he wouldn't bid on it if he didn't know what he was doing. I'd be willing to give him \$200 for his bargain, and run the risk of getting sold," said the man.

Several in the crowd heard his words, and they began to have regrets.

The auctioneer might have been right after all, when he remarked that there was a possible fortune in the safe.



## CHAPTER II.

## LONG AND COMPANY, BOY BROKERS.

After paying for the safe as it stood, and receiving the combination on a slip of paper so he could open it, and his bill of sale, from the auctioneer, Johnny Long tackled the second-hand dealer, and after considerable haggling, bought from him at a reasonable advance price everything he had purchased.

"Young man," said the auctioneer, as the boy was starting for the door, "don't forget that you must have this safe out of here by to-morrow noon."

"Who says so?" replied Long.

"I say so."

"I think you've had your say. You have finished your business, and when you have received your commission for services rendered you will be through, so it is unnecessary for you to issue orders to me. I don't intend to move that safe by noon to-morrow, or the day after, either."

"Then it will be moved and stored at your risk and expense," replied the auctioneer.

"Who's going to do it?"

"The superintendent of the building will probably do it, as the office is rented."

"Perhaps you know who it is rented to?"

"I do not. It is none of my business."

"Then I will tell you. The office is rented to the firm of Long & Co."

"Oh, I see. A relative of yours, eh? That alters the case. Maybe you bought the safe for him. I merely called your attention to the matter of moving the safe because I was instructed to notify bidders that their purchases would have to be removed at once."

"All right, sir. I'm much obliged to you. I believe there is nothing more to go now," said Johnny.

"Nothing more! Everything but your safe has got to be taken away by Moxey, the Nassau street dealer."

"Everything that Moxey bought I have re-purchased from him."

"Have you? Got a bill of sale from him?"

"I have the bill of sale you gave him, on which he has transferred to me all his title to the various articles, with the exception of a few small things which he has taken away," replied Johnny.

"All right, my young friend. Mr. Bixby and I will retire in a few minutes and leave you in possession of the office and your purchases."

Nearly all the crowd had left.

A few of the more curious ones remained.

They were mostly persons who had made bids on the safe.

"Say, young man," said one, acting as spokesman for the others, "aren't you going to open the safe and see whether you've struck luck?"

"No," replied Johnny. "I know about what's in it without looking."

"Do you? Are those certificates of stock worth much?"

"I don't imagine I could buy a skyscraper with them."

"I suppose you got a bargain, and we people got left?"

"If you got left it was your own fault. You had the same chance that I had to buy the safe and what was in it."

"That's all right; but we didn't have your inside knowledge of the value of what was in it. You were taking no chances while we were."

"Well, then, for your consolation, I will inform you that the bundles of certificates of mining and industrial stock have no market value, as far as I know. If they had, Mr. Jackson probably would not have left instructions to include them in the sale of the safe. At any rate his executor would not have complied with directions that were not profitable to the estate."

"If you knew the certificates had little if any value why did you pay so much for the safe?"

"Because I need a good safe, and that one is easily worth a hundred dollars."

"You could have done better by buying one of a dealer in second-hand safes."

"Maybe I could, but I am satisfied with my purchase."

"What are you going to do with that mining and industrial stock?"

"You'll have to excuse me answering that question."

The spokesman took the hint, and he and the others walked out of the office.

They were hardly gone when a good-looking boy of Johnny's age came to the door and looked in.

"Hello, Will," said Johnny, "come in. The funeral is over and the mourners have departed. The remains have been disposed of, and we own most of them, all, in fact, that you see about you. Those two gentlemen at the desk yonder are the auctioneer and Mr. Bixby, the executor of the Jackson estate. As soon as they have finished their business they will go, too."

"Then we can open up right away," said Will, whose other name was Waters.

"Just as soon as a sign painter removes the letters now on the door and substitutes the legend of Long & Co., Stocks and Bonds. Mining and Industrial Shares Bought and Sold on Commission."

"You got the safe and its contents, then?" said Will.

"You can gamble on it I did."

"I was afraid that maybe you'd be late in getting here."

"I didn't have any time to spare. I knew it would be the last thing offered. It was on the point of passing into the hands of a second-hand dealer when I punctured his expectations with a higher bid."

"Punctured is good. One would think he was a tire."

"He looked tired when I kept on bidding against him."

"Did he, and I suppose he soon re-tired from the contest as you got the safe? What did it cost you?"

"You mean us. It cost us just one hundred cases."

"That was better than you expected to get it for?"

"It was. The executor counted on the contents booming the sale price, but it didn't work with the crowd, at least to any great extent. They did not show any eagerness to go it blind, even when told that the contents consisted of numerous shares of mining and industrial stock. They regarded the unseen securities with suspicion and wouldn't nibble very hard."

"They couldn't have connected with the independent order of Wall Street lambs. By the way, what's the difference between a Wall Street lamb and a country lamb?"

"One has two feet and the other four," replied Johnny.

"That's true, but it isn't the difference I mean."

"What is the difference, then?"

"One gambles on the market and the other gambols on the meadows."

"That isn't bad for you. Say, my sister is something of an artist. I'll get her to embody that joke of yours in a picture, and we'll hang it up in the office for the brokers who may visit us to admire."

"That will be great. I should like to see the product of my brain illustrated."



"Never mind that now. What alterations do you think we should make in the furniture of this room? As the head of the firm I shall have my desk by that window."

"All right. Suppose I plank the other desk at the back of yours. Then the head and tail of the firm would be in suitable juxtaposition."

"Suitable what?"

"Juxtaposition. You know what that means, don't you? Nearness."

"Holy smoke, Will! Don't jar me that way again. If you are studying the unabridged dictionary don't hurl any of it at me. Please remember that we are starting out in the brokerage business, with a small capital, and an unlimited amount of nerve, and—stick to business. I think you'd better go over to West Broadway, to that sign painter who has a loft near the elevated station, and bring a man over here to fix up the door. I'll stay here and hold the fort."

"Whatever you say goes with me, Johnny. I'll make tracks for the painter's."

Will turned on his heel and departed, and half an hour later returned with a painter, who carried a satchel in his hand.

By that time the auctioneer and the executor of the Jackson estate had gone.

Johnny handed the painter a slip with the matter he wanted put on the door, and the man began operations by taking off the old sign of "Wilford Jackson, Broker."

The late Mr. Jackson had, for a year before his death, been conducting his business on a modest basis, owing to the fact that a certain speculation he engaged in turned out so disastrously that he was nearly sent to the wall.

Johnny had been his faithful messenger and junior clerk all along, and the broker thought a great deal of the boy.

The day before he died he sent for Johnny and bade him a last good-by, for the doctors had given him up.

He told the boy that he had prepared a codicil to be attached to his will which would give Johnny \$100 and all the old stock certificates in his safe.

"I'm not giving you much, my boy," he said, "for the stock has no market value, but if I were you I'd hold on to it, for maybe out of the bunch one or two might some day turn up a trump. At any rate that has been my anticipation, but it can't be realized now, for I am going to that mysterious hereafter where such things as stock have no place."

So when Broker Jackson died Johnny expected to receive the valueless certificates, but he didn't get them just the same, nor the \$100 either, for the codicil, for some unexplained reason, was not attached to the will, nor did the executor know anything about it.

Johnny, however, determined to get them if he could and offered to buy them for a small price.

The executor, however, had a luminous idea with respect to them and refused to sell them, though he felt they did not count as a marketable asset to the estate.

The "luminous idea" was to sell them in connection with the safe.

This plan was carried out, as we have seen, but it did not pan out the way the executor expected.

Johnny, before the sale, offered him \$50 for the certificates.

By attending the sale the boy practically got them for nothing, for the safe, which he also wanted in the business he was about to launch in partnership with his friend, Will Waters, was worth the price he paid for both.

It took the painter half an hour to remove the old sign and paint the new one.

Johnny and Will stood outside and watched the proceeding, which was very interesting to them.

When the man had finished it, the glass presented as important a front as any door on that floor, and the boys were very well satisfied.

"Long & Co.," said Will. "Although I'm only the Co. I feel just as important as if my name was there in large letters. Long may the firm flourish."

"Whether we buy or sell stock for ourselves, we are bound to be Long in the market," chuckled Johnny.

"Sure thing," grinned Will. "Now let's go home, for we can't do anything more to-day."

"Yes we can. We'll order our printing, books and stationery, put a standing advt. in a couple of the financial papers, subscribe for several others, and arrange for a renewal of the ticker service. After that we will go home."

Accordingly the boys locked up and went off to attend to those important details.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE WORTHLESS SECURITIES.

Johnny Long lived with an uncle and aunt in the Bronx, while Will Waters lived with his parents in Brooklyn.

The mother of Johnny, some years after the death of the boy's father, had married again and was living in Boston.

Her second husband's name was Pendleton, and he was a bookkeeper in a large dry good store.

The reason why Johnny came to New York was because he didn't get on with his new father.

He found his father's brother, Cyrus Long, much congenial to him, and as his aunt was as good to him as a mother, he got along very nicely in his new home.

He also had the company of his cousin, Kittie Long, who was a vivacious and captivating young lady of about his own age.

She and Johnny were as much alike as two peas in a pod, and sometimes the boy wished she wasn't his cousin.

Johnny appeared at the office at nine next morning, and soon afterward Will came in.

"What shall we do first, Johnny?" asked Will.

"We'll go over those stock certificates and make a schedule of them," was the reply.

The safe was opened and the certificates brought forth and dumped on Johnny's desk.

Will wrote the names down, with the number of shares of each, as his partner read them off and tied up each company in a separate bundle.

While they were thus employed a couple of brokers, who Johnny knew very well, walked in on them.

"Hello, Johnny," said Broker Howard, "this is a surprise."

"Good morning, gentlemen. Glad to see you. Help yourselves to seats and make yourselves at home. Fine day."

"We heard that you hired Jackson's office, but we hardly believed it, so Grant and I came up to see if the report was true," said Howard.

"I hope you are satisfied that it is," replied Johnny.

"The evidence is before us so we are bound to be. What are you doing with all those certificates of stock?"



You've got enough of them to stock a safe. You haven't been burgling somebody's safe deposit box, have you?" laughed the trader.

"We bought these yesterday of the executor of the Jackson estate."

"What, all of them?"

"Yes, sir; all of them."

"You must have a lot of capital or else they can't be worth much."

"Mr. Jackson bought them for good money at various times, but when he needed money he couldn't realize on them," said Johnny.

"Then they don't amount to much."

"They'll make a good bluff, that's about all; but you needn't circulate the fact, for it would only raise a laugh against us. We're not in business just to furnish amusement for Wall Street. It is as serious a matter with us as your business is with you."

"Oh, we won't hold you up to ridicule. If we can help you in any way call on either of us. But I am not sure that this is a wise move on your part, Johnny. It costs money to occupy an office in this building, and if you don't do enough business to justify the expense, you'll come out at the small end of the horn."

"That's no fiction, Mr. Howard; but if we don't keep on top it won't be for the want of trying. We have capital enough to give us a start, and with a reasonable amount of luck, we expect to pull through."

"Well, we wish you luck. What stock is that over there?"

"That big bunch? The Little Giant Mining & Milling Co. Mr. Jackson was heavily interested in it. When the company went on the fritz, something over a year ago, my late boss got such a soak in the financial solar plexus that he had to give up his suite of rooms in the Astor and take this modest office in the Arlington."

"The stock isn't worth anything now. What are you going to do with it?"

"Keep it. There are 100,000 shares represented in that bunch. Maybe we'll buy up enough of the balance that was issued to control the property."

"What good would that do you?"

"I couldn't tell you now; but it would be something to say that we owned a mining proposition out West, even if there was nothing in it."

"Rather an empty honor. I would advise you not to waste any of your money on it."

"We couldn't waste much, for the stock has no value, consequently, if we started to accumulate any more of it we wouldn't pay much for it."

"If you paid a cent a share every cent invested would be a dead loss."

"You can't tell what might happen in the future. I've heard of dead mines coming to life again in an unexpected way."

"True; but such things don't happen once in a coon's age with such propositions as the Little Giant. How many shares would you have to buy to get control of the property?"

"Fifty thousand one hundred."

"Then you hold a third interest in it now?"

"We do."

"I wouldn't monkey with it. One of these days when you get older and wiser you'll use those certificates to figure on. That's about all the use they're good for. What else have you got there?"

"Ten thousand shares of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. Worth \$10 a share at par. I believe Mr. Jackson paid 25

cents a share for the block. He expected that the company would make a lot of money out of their patents."

The two brokers laughed.

"What is the company doing?"

"Nothing that I know of."

"How about the plant?"

"It occupies part of a small loft on Grand street, and the president and patentee is the only active worker. He sells the product around the streets on a push cart, and he barely pays his expenses. The palatial palace he told Mr. Jackson he expected to build one day out of his share of the profits has contracted to a small room in the Mills House No. 1. Instead of dining at Delmonico's he eats on the Bowery or Park Row. In fact, he lunched at my expense on Ann street the other day. If he hadn't met me he told me that he wouldn't have ate at all, for he'd only sold one bottle of ink that morning."

"How much will you sell the Imperial for?" laughed Broker Grant.

"I think a cent a share would be a fair valuation, banking on the future," replied Johnny.

"The present prospects of the company do not warrant such a figure. If you found a purchaser willing to pay a tenth of a cent I'd advise you to work it off," said the broker.

"That would be \$10 for that bunch of handsome-looking securities. What an appalling sacrifice! No, I'd rather paper my room with them."

"I suppose the rest of your stock is on the same plane with those you have mentioned?" said Howard.

"Yes, I guess they are," said Johnny, looking rather regretfully at the piles of valueless certificates, which had once represented hopeful enterprise. "They are dead ones, but on the chance of one of the corpses coming back to a sphere of usefulness we intend to keep them."

The two brokers smiled.

"Why don't you frame one of each variety and hang them about your office? They might be ornamental if not useful."

"I will consider your suggestion, Mr. Howard, and perhaps act on it. As most of them represent mining companies they might add an air of importance to the place that would impress strangers," chuckled Johnny.

"That's right," laughed Howard, and then he and Grant got up and said they would have to get to their offices.

"Here, Will, put these securities in the safe," said Johnny.

"Securities is good. They'll be secure there even if they're not worth anything," replied Will, following directions.

Johnny picked up a mining paper which had been delivered that morning and glanced over it.

The following paragraph struck his eye:

"The Henrietta Gold and Silver Mine.—Some weeks since we printed an item to the effect that this defunct mine had changed hands, and that a new company had been organized to take over the property. About 400,000 shares of treasury stock were sold two or three years ago at from five to ten cents a share, and the money thus obtained was used for development purposes. The results were not encouraging enough to warrant the original promoters continuing the work, and so the operations were abandoned and the mine took its place among the hundreds of wildcat propositions which have contributed so much to weaken public confidence in the general mining industry. We are now informed that the new people in



charge have opened up an unsuspected vein of ore, specimens of which assay at about \$100 a ton. This doesn't suggest a bonanza, but it wears a hopeful look. Whether the mine will ultimately realize the expectations now being formed of it is a problem for the future to solve, but at least it will be good news for those people who hold some of the shares in the original company."

"The Henrietta," muttered Johnny. "Why, we have a bunch of that stock."

He consulted the list made out by Will.

It showed that the firm owned 20,000 shares.

"Say, Will," called Johnny.

"Hello," replied the junior partner.

"Fetch me that bunch of Henrietta certificates."

Will did so.

"Now read that paragraph."

Will read it.

"Say, how much have we got of it?" said Will, eagerly.

Johnny pointed to the list.

"Gee, that's fine!" exclaimed Will. "We may be right in it with that stock."

"If it pans out anything we can count ourselves a lucky Wall Street firm."

## CHAPTER IV.

### TWO MORE VISITORS.

At that moment there came a knock on the door.

"Come in," said Johnny.

In walked a broker who was a neighbor of theirs.

He had attended the sale on the afternoon before and had seen Johnny buy the safe and its unseen contents.

He was curious to learn what the stock consisted of, and he had a reason for wishing to know, too.

"Good morning, young man," he said to Johnny. "My name is Watt."

"I give it up, sir. You ought to know better than me." The visitor stared at the boy broker.

"I don't catch the drift of your remark," he said.

"You asked me what your name was, and I——"

"I said my name was Watt—W-A-double T."

"Oh, I beg your pardon. Glad to know you, Mr. Watt. Sit down."

"I am a broker on this floor and therefore a neighbor of yours."

Johnny nodded.

"You seem to have started in the brokerage business with a partner."

"Seem to have started! Why, we have started. You saw our sign on the door?"

"Of course. Is this young man here your partner?"

"Yes, sir. Allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Waters. Will this is Broker Watt."

"Pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Watt," said Will.

"I was present yesterday when you bought that safe with its enigmatical contents," said the caller.

Will grinned at his partner.

"So I thought I'd drop in and see what kind of a bargain you got," added the broker.

"He's got a nerve," thought Will, winking at Johnny.

"It is rather too soon for us to find out whether we got a bargain or not," replied the senior partner.

"Have you a list of the certificates? I might be of use

to you in pointing out if any of them have a value," said the visitor, blandly.

"There is the list we have just made out," said Johnny, handing him the paper.

Broker Watt glanced over it, and his eyes sparkled when they lighted on Henrietta.

"I'm afraid there is nothing on the list that is worth anything," he said, handing it back. "Stop—let me see it again. Henrietta. I think I could sell that lot for you if you want to get rid of it. There was a man in my office yesterday who said he'd like to get about 25,000 shares. He said he'd be willing to give a cent a share for it. That would give you quite a little profit on your safe purchase," and the speaker bent a keen and expectant look on Johnny.

"Yes, it would," replied the boy broker, slowly. "We would get twice our money back and still have the safe."

"Exactly," said the broker, briskly. "Shall I write you my check for \$200?"

"Well, no. I don't think we care to sell Henrietta."

"Why not?" asked their visitor, looking disappointed.

"Really, I prefer not to explain our reasons. If there is anything else on the list——"

"No, there is nothing else," replied Mr. Watt, impatiently.

"Sorry. There are 10,000 shares of Imperial Invisible Ink Co. which——"

"Don't want them," snorted Mr. Watt, who looked a little mad.

"There are 5,000 shares of the International Duplex Corrugated——"

"I can only use the Henrietta stock," interrupted Broker Watt.

"How about the Red Sox mine?"

"Nothing in it."

"What do you know about the Hilltop Extension?"

"Nothing," said the broker, shortly.

"The New Eldorado Mining and——"

"Dead as a door nail. There's nothing in your list worth a cent."

"Don't you think that the Little Giant will come to life some——"

"No, I don't. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you \$250 for those Henrietta shares."

"Make it \$500 and I'll consider the offer."

"Look here, young man, do you take me for a fool?" roared Watt.

"I should hope not. The only fools in Wall Street seem to be the lambkins."

"Then don't suggest such a ridiculous price as two and a half cents a share. It isn't worth what I offer you."

"Then why do you make the offer?"

"I told you that a customer of mine wanted it."

"Oh, I see."

"I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole myself."

"But they say it's coming to life."

"Who says so?" asked the broker, sharply.

"There's a paragraph in this paper about it. Read it."

"All rot."

"How can you say that until you have read the item?"

"I read it awhile ago. There is nothing in it."

"Your customer must think there is something in the mine or he wouldn't ask you to buy 25,000 shares for him."

"That's my customer's business, not mine. So you won't sell what you have?"

"Not at the present moment."

"Then I will wish you a good morning," and Mr. Watt got up and departed.



"He went out mad," grinned Will.

"I can't help that. He had no reason to get mad because we wouldn't sell the Henrietta shares."

"You irritated him going over that list of bonehead propositions," laughed Will.

Johnny chuckled and shoved the list into a pigeon-hole.

"Here, you can return the Henrietta to the safe. Keep it apart from the rest. We may get a nickel a share for it yet," said the boy broker.

"I think I'll go out and get a sun bath," said Will, reaching for his hat.

"Where are you going?"

"Up to the little bank to watch the blackboard."

"If you see anything that looks good telephone me."

"I will."

As Will started for the door it opened and admitted Kittie Long.

"Why, hello, Kittie, what brought you down to Wall Street," cried Johnny, jumping up and offering his fair visitor a chair.

"What do you suppose?" she replied, saucily. "I came to inspect your office."

"And my partner, I suppose," laughed the boy broker. "Kittie, let me make you acquainted with Will Waters. Will, this is my cousin, Miss Long. You've heard me speak of her."

Will bowed and took Kittie's gloved hand as if he was afraid of breaking it.

"You've got quite a place here, Johnny," said the girl. "Dear me, don't you want to employ me in some capacity?"

"Nothing would give us greater pleasure if we had something for you to do."

"Oh, that wouldn't make any difference with me. I could sit here and look pretty, and draw my wages on Saturday," she laughed.

"I'll bet you could do all those things to the queen's taste. I suppose you'd like to choose your own office hours?"

"Well, I wouldn't want to come down before eleven, and I should like to go home whenever I felt like it."

"Say, Kitty, there's nothing slow about you. When we get wealthy we'll consider your application," said Johnny.

"Oh, I'll be married by that time," laughed the girl, with a demure look at Will, tapping the rug with the shapely toe of her boot.

"I hope that won't be soon, for I don't want to lose you," said Johnny.

"I thought you were tired of me."

"Couldn't get tired of you to save my life. You spring a new surprise on me every day."

"Do I? Then my appearance here is to-day's surprise."

"It certainly is, but a most delightful one, I assure you."

"Dear me, you said that very nice. I believe I shall be able to make something of you after all."

"You said that very nice yourself. So you think we have a nice office?"

"Yes, indeed. You boys look like real men of business."

"Thanks. We flatter ourselves that we are."

"I thought you had a little room, just big enough to hold two desks and one small visitor like myself."

"Oh, you did? Well, you see we amount to something more than that."

"It must cost you something for this office."

"We don't get the use of it for nothing. Offices in this building are rented by the square foot."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The company that owns the building figures out the rent according to the number of square feet of available space on each floor."

"How many square feet have you?"

"We haven't measured it. All I can tell you is that there are six feet resting on it."

"You mean our feet? Aren't you too witty for anything?"

"Say, Kitty, how long are you going to stay?"

"Am I in the way? If I am—"

"Not at all. Your presence is like a beam of sunshine. The reason I asked is if you will remain long enough we'll take you out to lunch."

"How nice! Will you take me to Delmonico's?"

"Delmonico's! Say, you've got a nerve, Kittie. Wait till we do a little business before striking us as hard as that. We'll take you to a nice restaurant on Broadway."

"It's too early to talk about lunch—only eleven o'clock. I've promised to meet mother at a department store at twelve sharp. You'll have to excuse me this time. I'll make a date with you for lunch some time, and allow you to spread yourself."

Kittie remained ten minutes longer and then said she'd have to go.

Will offered to see her as far as a Broadway car, and she accepted his escort.

They went off together and Johnny took up the mining paper.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BLUFF THAT DIDN'T WORK.

Several days passed, during which time a number of traders visited the boy brokerage firm to find out, if possible, what they were doing to justify their claim that they were brokers.

Most of the visitors regarded Long & Co. as a joke.

As far as the brokers could see the boys were not doing anything.

It was believed that the lads had come into a little money, and being afflicted with swelled heads, had opened up the office.

The general impression was that they wouldn't last long.

The boy brokers received their visitors politely, entertained them in a genial way, and answered most of the questions put to them quite frankly.

On the whole, the boy firm accumulated a certain amount of popularity and were talked about from one end of Wall Street to the other.

Another attempt was made by Broker Watt to buy their Henrietta shares.

He did not call on them again himself, but sent one of his clerks with an offer of two and a half cents a share.

The offer was not supposed to come from him.

The clerk was instructed to represent himself as a man who was looking for the stock, and the trader gave him \$500 cash to pay for the certificates in case the boy traders were in a mood to sell.

It happened, however, that just before the clerk called Johnny noticed another item in the mining paper about the mine.

It confirmed the previous statement that ore had been found on the property, and advised those persons who had shares in their possession to hold on to them, pending further developments.

The clerk's mission was, therefore, a failure, as Johnny



told him the firm did not need money bad enough to be in a rush to sell the Henrietta stock even at five cents a share, which was twice as much as their visitor was authorized to offer.

That same day, Bixby, the executor of the Jackson estate called in.

He asked Johnny if he didn't find some shares of the Henrietta mining stock among the certificates in the safe he bought.

"Yes, sir."

"How many were there?"

"Twenty thousand."

"Just as I thought. I will have to ask you to turn them over to me."

"Turn them over to you! What for?"

"They belong to the estate and should not have been in the safe at the time of the sale."

"I can't help that, sir. I bought the safe and its contents, and you were present and concurred in the sale when the auctioneer knocked the lot down to me."

"That's all right, but the Henrietta shares were not intended to be included in the sale."

"Then you should have removed them from the safe before allowing it to be put up at auction."

"I confess it was an oversight on my part, but I must get them back, for I am responsible to the estate for them."

"You can have them back at ten cents a share."

"I do not propose to pay for them," said Bixby, tartly.

"Do you expect me to give them to you for nothing?"

"I do."

"Excuse me saying so, but I think you have a lot of nerve to make such a request."

"Nerve or not I demand their return."

"Your demand cuts no ice with this firm whatever. We bought the stock and we're going to hold on to it for whatever we can get for it," replied Johnny.

"You refuse to turn those certificates over to me?"

"I do."

"Very well, young man. I am a lawyer and will take immediate measures to compel you to give them up."

"All right. If you can force us to give them up you're a good one. We know our rights in this matter, though we are not even budding lawyers, and we shall defend any action you may bring against us."

"You put on a bold front, young man."

"No more than I have a right to. I'm ready to bet that you won't find a judge who will give a decision in your favor."

"What do you know about the law?" sneered the executor.

"Nothing; but I know what justice is. We hold possession of those certificates and that's nine points of the law to begin with. The burden of proof will rest with you. Can you deny that we bought that stock fairly and squarely?"

"No; but I can show that it was sold through a mistake."

"If it was through a mistake the mistake was yours, and we are not responsible for it. How is it you have waited a whole week before coming to us about it?"

"I have just discovered that the Henrietta shares are missing."

"Then you didn't know they were in the safe at the time of the sale?"

"Certainly not. If I had I should have taken them out."

Johnny got up and went to the safe, not to take out the Henrietta certificates, but to get a penciled memoranda he had found among the discarded stock.

Returning to his desk he held it up before the executor to look at.

"Is that your writing, sir?"

"It looks something like it, but I am not certain," replied the lawyer.

"Well, that's your signature, isn't it?"

Bixby was obliged to admit that it was.

"Very good. Let me read this memoranda. This is what it says: 'I find that the following stocks are worthless and of no value to the estate.' A list of the stock follows, and among them is the Henrietta. What have you to say now?"

Bixby was clearly taken back by this piece of evidence in his own handwriting.

"I should not have included the Henrietta in that list," he said, in a lame way. "It was a mistake of mine."

"That is two mistakes you admit having committed. Really, Mr. Bixby, for a lawyer, your accuracy is not to be commended."

The executor flushed angrily.

"Well," he said, "I am willing to admit that you have some title to this Henrietta stock, but not enough to hold it in a court of equity. Rather than put you to the expense of defending an action I will give you \$100 for the stock."

"One hundred dollars! Why, I have just refused \$250 for the shares because my partner and I value them at \$1,000."

"They're not worth any such money," exclaimed the lawyer.

"What do you value them at?"

"At the utmost, \$500."

"You are wrong. They are not worth a cent in any stock market. The Henrietta mine was taken off the Goldfield Exchange a long time ago, and it never was listed as anything but a prospect. Though sold by promoters at five and ten cents a share it was never quoted higher than three."

"You pretend to know a lot about this stock."

"I have taken the trouble to look it up. That is my business, and I try not to make mistakes in my line. Now, Mr. Bixby, isn't it a fact that the reason you have taken such a sudden interest in Henrietta is because of the recent reports that have appeared about it in certain Western papers, and incidentally in the financial journal of this city?"

"Nonsense!" replied the lawyer, with a flush.

"Do you mean to say that you haven't seen those reports?"

"I decline to say whether I have or not."

"That is, I take it, as good as an admission that you have."

"It is no admission. Will you sell me those certificates for \$100?"

"I will not."

"Then you shall hear from the surrogate on the subject."

"Very well. I am ready to explain my side of the question. If he holds any one accountable for the stock he will hold the executor, and that's yourself."

With an exclamation of angry disappointment the visitor rose from the chair and started for the door.

"Good-day, Mr. Bixby," said Johnny, pleasantly.

The lawyer declined to notice his words, opening the door with a jerk and slamming it after him.

Johnny chuckled.

"I doubt if he will take any legal action to try and recover that Henrietta stock, for I don't see that he has



any case. I can easily prove that I bought the entire contents of the safe with that article. I am glad I saved that memoranda with his signature attached. That shows he did not leave the Henrietta certificates in the safe through an oversight, as he pretended he did. It's as clear as sunlight that his interest in the Henrietta shares began from the moment he learned that the mine was beginning to attract attention again. He thought because he is a lawyer that he could bulldoze me into giving the certificates up. I guess he knows better now."

Johnny then turned his attention to the perusal of the daily stock report.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CONCERNING THE IMPERIAL INVISIBLE INK CO.

On the following day Johnny noticed that D. & O. stock was going up in a steady kind of way.

The market was generally bullish, and an advance all along the line was looked for.

The result was Wall Street was full of "lambs" looking for easy money.

They thronged the reception-rooms of the different brokerage offices, and Johnny found a mob of battle-scarred veterans in the little bank when he pushed his way in.

The entire capital of the firm of Long & Co. amounted to about \$1,200, after a month's office rent had been paid, and the furniture and other things had been settled for.

Johnny put up \$1,000 of this sum as marginal security on 100 shares of D. & O. at 82, and then sat on a bench to watch the course of the market.

He remained there till one o'clock, by which time the stock had gone up two points, then he went to lunch.

Before returning to the little bank he dropped in at his office.

Will was holding the fort.

"Had your lunch, Will?" he asked.

"Yes. I patronized the quick-lunch at the rear of this building on Pine street, and I wasn't out over fifteen minutes."

"Had any visitors?"

"Broker W-A. double T was in and made me an offer of five cents a share for Henrietta certificates. I told him I would submit his offer to you when you came in. What do you think about it?"

"If it's worth \$1,000 to him I guess it's worth that much to us."

"Then we don't sell, eh?"

"Not at present."

"It would almost double our present capital, and it would be all clear profit."

"We may double our capital on D. & O. which I went into this morning. I purchased 100 shares at 82, and when I went to lunch it was up to 84. Look at the tape and see what it is going at now."

Will looked and announced that the last quotation was 84 5-8.

"It's going up steadily, so we ought to make a pretty good profit out of it."

"Say, Johnny, I have an idea."

"Have you? I'm glad to hear it. What is it?"

"It's about that Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

"What about it?"

"As the case stands now the president, who you say is the picture of hard luck, is about the whole company."

Johnny nodded.

"How many shares of stock did he sell when he promoted the company?"

"I couldn't tell you."

"What did you say his name was?"

"Thomas Fenton."

"He invented that particular ink, I believe?"

"Yes. He got out the patent on it, and turned it into the company in return for the controlling interest. He formed the company in order to get money to buy a plant and put the ink on the market after it was manufactured under his supervision."

"You said that Mr. Jackson paid 25 cents a share, or \$2,500 for the 10,000 shares that now belong to us."

"That's right."

"Did Fenton get that money?"

"I suppose he did."

"The company was duly incorporated under the laws of this State with a capital placed at \$1,000,000—100,000 shares of a par value of \$10 each. Fenton evidently had expansive ideas about the Imperial. I believe it takes three or four persons to incorporate a company at the start. I wonder if your late boss was one of them?"

"I believe he was. He took a great deal of interest in the company at first. He was on the board of directors and was elected vice-president."

"I suppose you have no idea who the other officers were?"

"No; but they were doubtless friends of Fenton, or people whom he succeeded in interesting in his project."

"Whatever stock was sold evidently went at a quarter a share, for that was the price you say Mr. Jackson paid, and we may assume he paid no more nor less than any other stockholder. Fenton retained, we will say, 51,000 shares himself—the controlling interest. That left 49,000 shares to be sold to furnish the working capital needed to start the company going. If they were all sold at 25 cents a share the sum of \$12,000 would have been realized. Not a very large cash investment for a million-dollar corporation."

"I should say not," laughed Johnny. "But what are you getting at?"

"Well, you see we have 10,000 shares of this company's stock and ought to have something to say about that plant on Grand street. If all the officers and shareholders have dropped out, because the enterprise has proven a failure, and left Fenton in possession of the business, which does not belong to him, but to the company, of which we are a part, wouldn't it be a good idea for us to look into the business and see if we can't make something out of it?"

"What's your idea—reorganize the company?"

"Yes, if we thought it would pay to do it. Let's get Fenton down here and talk the matter over. As things stand with him he's hardly making a cheap living. He'll be glad if we can show him how to do better. If things are allowed to go on, he may sell the plant for whatever it will bring, put the money in his pocket and skip."

"It's a wonder he hasn't done that, for the last time I saw him he was on his last legs."

"When did you see him last?"

"About a month ago."

"He might have sold the plant since."

"Easily. There was nobody, that I know of, to prevent him."

"Then if we're going to act in this matter we ought to do it right away."

"We'll walk up to the plant this afternoon when I come



back from the little bank, and if it is still there, and we can get in, we'll see what Fenton's invisible ink preparation really amounts to. I imagine that the reason the company was a failure was because there is no paying market for the article."

"You've got to advertise extensively to work up a market for anything these days. I suppose the company's limited capital, after deducting the money necessary to purchase the plant and a quantity of the raw material needed for producing a supply of the ink, did not warrant the outlay which advertising properly called for."

"Very likely. Well, think out your scheme while I'm away, and if we find we can make anything out of it, we will tackle it," said Johnny, starting for the door.

When the Exchange closed at three, D. & O. had advanced to 86.

Johnny was well satisfied with the outlook, for the firm was \$100 ahead on the deal so far.

He started back for the office.

Standing on the corner of Nassau and Wall streets was a shabby-looking man with a tray in front of him, resting on a portable three-legged stand.

The tray was spread with small bottles containing a pale white liquid.

A printed sign hung from the front of the stand bearing the following words:

"Imperial Invisible Ink. Price, 10 cents."

The sign caught Johnny's eye and then he looked at the vendor.

As he expected, that individual was Thomas Fenton.

"Hello, Fenton," he said, walking up to him.

"How de do, Johnny. Who you workin' for now?"

"Long & Co., brokers, financiers, promoters, capitalists in the perspective, and so forth, and so on ad libitum," replied Johnny, briskly.

"Your name is Long, ain't it?" said Fenton.

"Nothing surer, old man."

"Then you're workin' for a relative of yours?"

"Guess again and maybe you'll hit it," laughed the boy.

"Ain't he a relative?"

"I'm working for myself."

"You don't mean it!"

"Come now, close up your shop and come with me. The firm of Long & Co. wants to have a talk with you."

Fenton grinned like a man who felt he was being jollied.

"Gather up your stock and come along up to my office. My partner and I wish to hold a pow-wow with you."

Johnny didn't look as if he was fooling, and Fenton said:

"What do you want to see me about?"

"Business connected with the Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

"The company has busted."

"Has it? I'm sorry to hear it. Has the office of the Secretary of the State been notified to that effect?"

"Not that I know of."

"Then the company isn't busted, legally, and its officers are liable to be called on at any time for a report of its financial condition."

"There ain't no officers any more."

"I thought you was the president?"

"I was till the company stopped doin' business."

"You seem to be selling some of its stock."

"Yes."

"And you're using the company's plant to make it, aren't you?"

"There ain't no more company, so the plant belongs to me."

"What became of your stockholders?"

"Dunno."

"My late esteemed boss, Mr. Jackson, had 10,000 shares and was vice-president."

Fenton nodded.

"That represented a tenth interest in the company's property. I suppose that it did not occur to you when you learned of Mr. Jackson's death that the executor of his estate would want to know something about the Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

Fenton looked uneasy.

"Has he been asking you about it?"

"No, he hasn't. He didn't think the company was worth investigating."

Fenton looked relieved.

"So he sold the stock, with other securities, to me and my partner for a small sum."

Fenton grinned.

"What did you buy it for? There ain't nothin' in it. I ain't hardly makin' a livin' out of the stuff. Nobody seems to want invisible ink. I sold ten of these bottles to-day. That's a dollar. What's that? I owe three months' rent on the loft and expect to be dispossessed. I'll have to sell the plant to a junk man and take up with some other business."

"You come with me to the office now, and maybe the firm will help you out. We have a tenth interest in the plant, and if you sold it without our permission we could have you arrested and brought before a magistrate, so it wouldn't be safe for you to dispose of it on the quiet. Any other stockholder could proceed against you in the same way. The plant doesn't belong to you, but to the company, and the company is still in existence, even if it's bankrupt, whether you think so or not."

## CHAPTER VII.

### INSPECTING THE INK COMPANY'S PLANT.

Fenton looked bewildered.

Johnny spoke like a person who knew what he was talking about, and as his listener had very crude ideas on the subject, even though he was the head of the company in question, he was all up in the air.

"Close up and come with me," said Johnny.

"I can't afford to miss the chance of a sale," protested Fenton.

"Never mind that. I'll see that you don't suffer. Come along."

So Fenton, wondering what was in the wind, returned his stock in trade to his grip, folded up his stand, and grabbing it under his left arm, accompanied Johnny to the Arlington building.

The boy broker led him into the elevator, which presently dumped them out on the sixth floor, and in another minute they entered the office of Long & Co.

"Will, this is Thomas Fenton, president of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co.," said Johnny. "Take that chair, Fenton."

Fenton took it after depositing his stand against the wall and his grip on the floor.

"This is a fine office," he said. "Do you rent it?"

"Who else? Our sign is on the door and there is one of our cards," said Johnny.

Fenton hadn't noticed the sign on the door particularly, but he read the card.



"Are you and your partner in the brokerage business?" he asked.

"The card says so, doesn't it?"

"I was in this buildin' once to see Mr. Jackson. He had a room about the size of this. You were with him then."

"This is the office he occupied."

"Is it? I thought it looked familiar."

"It ought to for the same furniture is in it that was here when you called about a year ago."

"Then you bought him out? You must have money," said Fenton, regarding the boy with a newly-born respect.

"You can't do business in Wall Street on hot air alone."

"I should opine not. It's a great surprise to me to see you way up in the world. If the company had been the success I anticipated I would have been rich myself; but it wasn't, more's the pity," and the speaker sighed.

"Now, Fenton, let's get down to business. How many shares do you hold in the Imperial?"

"What's the use of talkin' about that? The stock ain't worth the paper it's writ on," replied the man.

"Will you kindly answer my question?"

"Fifty-one thousand. I kept the controlling interest in return for my patent rights."

"That left 49,000 shares to be sold," went on Johnny. "Mr. Jackson bought 10,000. Who did you sell the rest to?"

"Mr. Jackson sold them to friends of his—all but 9,000 shares."

"Oh, he did. Where are the company's books?"

"Up at the shop on Grand street."

"Who were the other officers besides you and Mr. Jackson? The secretary and the treasurer, I mean?"

"Don't let's talk about him," said Fenton, with a mournful look.

"Who do you mean by him?"

"The secretary and treasurer."

"Did one person fill both offices?"

"He did, till he skipped."

"Skipped!" cried Johnny, looking at his partner.

"Yes. That's what busted the company. He run off with the money on hand."

"Who was he?"

"My brother-in-law."

Johnny whistled.

"So your brother-in-law was connected with the company?"

"I gave him 5,000 of my shares so he could qualify for office."

"He could have qualified with five shares as well as 5,000. The heavy holding you had naturally elected him. So he betrayed his trust and ran away with the company's funds?"

Fenton nodded sadly.

"What did the minority shareholders have to say to that?"

"We held a meetin' and Mr. Jackson got out a warrant for his arrest."

"Was he arrested?"

"No. The police couldn't find him."

"The company couldn't go on for lack of funds, I suppose?"

"Yes. We couldn't raise no more money. The stock was not assessable, which was a good thing for me, as I couldn't have paid no assessment. At any rate the men Mr. Jackson got into it were disgusted, and said they were through. So that was the end of the company. I've run the plant since, trying to pay the rent of the loft and make

a livin', but it's been hard scratchin', and I owe three months' rent, as I told you before."

"I hope that you understand now that the plant isn't yours? You have only a half interest in it and in your patent rights."

"I don't care. It wouldn't fetch much from a junk man. If somebody wanted to continue the business it would be worth buyin', for it's in good shape to be run."

"How much rent is owing on the loft?"

"Forty-five dollars. The rent is \$15 a month."

"Who is the landlord?"

"The man who has a shop on the ground floor. He owns the buildin' and rents out the upper floors in lofts."

"The plant, I believe, only occupies a part of a loft?"

"The back part of the top floor."

"We'll go up there and take a look at it. I also want to see the company's books."

"Do you think of doin' anythin' with the plant?"

"Possibly. It will depend on what arrangements we can make with you."

"I'm open to any offer that'll give me a decent livin'. As you own Mr. Jackson's stock you have somethin' to say about the plant, but you must recollect that I have a half interest in it."

"What good is your half interest to you at the present moment?"

"Not much good."

"So I thought," said Johnny, getting up. "Come, let's be going."

So the three walked down to Hanover square and took a Third avenue elevated train.

They got out at the Grand street station and Fenton piloted the way to the building where the defunct I. I. I. Co. had its plant on the top floor back.

There was no elevator in the building and of necessity they had to walk up.

When they reached the top floor the door facing them bore a tin sign marked:

"Imperial Invisible Ink Co. No Admittance."

Fenton produced a key and admitted them to the room, which was divided by a partition.

The manufacturing plant was in the larger of the two compartments.

The smaller one had the appearance of a rough office.

The boys looked the place over with critical eyes, while Fenton explained how he made the ink.

The three then adjourned to the smaller room.

"Now, where are the books?" asked Johnny.

Fenton produced them from a drawer in the desk.

The small one was a "Record."

On the first page was a list of the stockholders, nine all told, giving their business addresses, and the number of shares (including the numbers of their certificates) each had purchased.

On the third and fourth pages were the "Minutes" of the first meeting of the shareholders, detailing the election of a board of directors.

Five of the nine stockholders were chosen.

The fifth page contained the brief proceedings of the directors, consisting chiefly of the selection of the officers of the company.

Fenton was elected president, Jackson, vice-president, and Simms, Fenton's brother-in-law, secretary and treasurer.

There were no further entries in the book.

The other book contained a record of the money paid in for stock, the money paid out for the plant, and the run-



ing expenses up to a certain point, all in Simms's handwriting.

The book was balanced in Jackson's writing, and showed the amount that should have been in the bank to the credit of the company, but which had disappeared with Simms.

"We'll take these books to our office," said Johnny.

Fenton made no objection.

"The company is practically bankrupt," went on the boy broker. "There is nothing in the treasury but 9,000 shares of unsold stock, and the only other asset is the plant, which is of little value except for the purpose it was bought for. What blank certificates of stock have you, Fenton?"

The man opened a drawer and pointed to a flat bundle.

"We'll take them," said Johnny. "Now, Fenton, the 5,000 shares of your own stock that you transferred to your brother-in-law must be considered a part of the company's assets. Probably it is all the company will be able to recover. That makes 14,000 shares of unsold stock in the treasury. To prevent the plant from being disposed, Long & Co. will advance \$15 for rent due and \$15 more for another month, plus \$40 to be charged to expense account, making \$100 advanced by us, and we will take a lien on the plant as security for the money. Make out a paper to that effect, Will, and Fenton will sign it as president of the company."

Will complied and Fenton signed it, without having much idea what all this was leading to.

"My partner will call on the landlord to-morrow and fix up the rent question," said Johnny. "The \$40 he will hand you, Fenton. Buy a new suit of clothes, and whatever else you may need, but be sure to keep enough of it to pay for a couple of weeks board and lodging. You can put in your time making up some stock if you have material on hand to do it with."

"Are you going to start the company up again?" asked Fenton.

"It will all depend on circumstances. At any rate you will not need to worry for a couple of weeks. Before that time expires we will let you know what we have decided to do."

That ended matters for that afternoon.

Johnny took charge of the two books and Will the package of blank certificates, and Fenton accompanied them as far as the Bowery.

The boys parted at the foot of the uptown elevated stairs, Johnny taking an express for the Bronx, while Will took a train down to the Brooklyn Bridge.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LONG & CO. GO INTO COPPER.

The boy brokers were at their office at a quarter past nine next morning.

Half a dozen letters, delivered by the mail carrier, lay on the floor.

Johnny gathered them up and took them to his desk.

They proved to be from people out of town, who had seen the advertisement of Long & Co. in the financial papers.

One enclosed a draft for \$500 with instructions for the firm to buy D. & O. stock with it.

The others wanted information on the stock market.

Johnny turned the letters over to Will to look after.

"Call on Howard and give him the order to buy 50 shares that man wants. Howard will divide the commission with us," said Johnny. "The other letters you will answer as your judgment dictates."

"Are you going over to the little bank now?" asked Will.

"In a few minutes, after we have a talk about the Imperial Invisible Ink Co.," replied the senior partner. "You brought over the blank certificates. Put the package in your desk. After lunch you can take the money up to Grand street and settle the rent with the landlord. The balance of the money goes to Fenton. If we don't do anything with the company we'll sell the plant for what it will bring, which probably won't be \$100."

"What do you think of doing with reference to the company?"

"I intend to visit the shareholders and have a talk with them. If they don't want to help reorganize the company I will make some arrangement with them for the purchase of the stock on time at my own figure. If they refuse my offer they are not likely to get anything at all."

"If we reorganize it ourselves, as it struck me that we might be able to do in connection with Fenton, it would have to be on a small scale at first, for we have no money to spare at present to finance anything," said Will.

"Of course. My immediate purpose is to merely keep the company on its legs until I can see if there's a future in it. Then we must secure the control by offering to finance it. It can't possibly go on without money, and we are about the only ones likely to take interest enough in it to make the necessary advances when we are able to afford it. If we can make the company even a moderate commercial success we'll make money out of it."

"In the present condition of things we ought to be able to take over the whole company for a song," said Will.

"Yes, but I don't intend to dump Fenton. We can't very well get along without him. I dare say he'll act square with us if we treat him fairly. He is so far down in the world now that he'll agree to anything."

"My idea was for him to run the business under our supervision."

"That's it exactly. Well, I must get over to the little bank and keep my eye on our deal."

It was after ten now.

Before leaving the office Johnny looked at the tape and found that D. & O. had opened at 86 7-8.

"We are nearly \$500 to the good," he said. "Let us hope we'll clear a thousand. We need the money."

"Bet your life we do," replied Will, sitting down at his desk.

Several days went by and the market continued to rise, D. & O. advancing to 93.

The boy brokers talked a good deal about the plans they had for making something out of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co., but they made no further move in the matter.

Twice, on his way uptown, Johnny visited the ink plant and found Fenton busy at work making up a stock of the ink.

He appeared to be quite cheerful, and his conversation showed that he had begun to entertain hopes that the company might become a success after all.

It was clear that he believed Johnny and his partner had lots of money, and he was anxious to stand well with the boys.

He declared that he was willing to agree to any arrangement they suggested which would enable him to make a steady living out of the ink business.



He no longer had visions of riches, with an automobile to ride around in.

His run of hard luck had taken all that out of him.

A week after Long & Co. went into the D. & O. deal Johnny sold out at a profit of \$15 a share, and this added \$1,500 to their limited capital.

When he got back to the office after lunch he found Fenton there talking to Will.

The ink man looked quite respectable now in a new suit of store clothes, with hat and shoes to match.

He had come down to announce that he had used up all his raw material, as well as his remaining supply of bottles, and therefore could do nothing further in the manufacturing line.

"Well," said Johnny, "we are not ready yet to do anything with the company, so I think the best thing you can do for the time being is to get out on the street again and sell the stuff. Go up on Fourteenth street, and along Sixth avenue, and then take in Twenty-third street. Keep an account of your sales and report to us every day by letter."

"All right," replied Fenton. "I've wanted to try that part of the city, but my clothes were so bad that I didn't have the nerve to go where I'd run against ladies. Now that I look decent I'm ready to tackle that section. Maybe I'll do a good trade there."

"You've got money enough to pay your expenses for another week, haven't you?"

"Yes," replied Fenton.

"All right. If we want to see you we will send you a letter making an appointment."

Fenton departed and soon afterward Johnny strolled down to the Curb.

He had noticed a report in the papers to the effect that North Dakota copper was looking up, and he wanted to see if there was a chance for the firm to make anything out of it.

The copper stock was selling at \$1 a share, and before the Exchange closed he bought 2,000 shares, to be delivered and paid for on the following day at three.

He found that several traders were willing to pay 8 cents a share for Henrietta stock, although it was not quoted on the Western exchanges yet, not having been relisted.

That gave the boy firm a chance to realize \$1,600 on their 20,000 shares if they choose to sell, but such was not their intention, for the reports from the mine continued very favorable.

The discovery of the ore ledge had been confirmed, but it appeared to be low grade, and the new promoters were prospecting for a better showing.

At any rate the Henrietta mine, or prospect, as it was called, looked encouraging, and the boy brokers felt highly elated to think that they had a block of its stock.

"If some of the other boneheads would only come to life, also, we'd be right in it," said Will.

"That's what we would," replied Johnny. "Our safe purchase has turned out a lucky speculation as it is. A sort of sixteen to one winner. I'll bet some of the people who were present at the sale would feel sore if they knew we were ahead \$1,600 on the deal. The auctioneer told them that there might be a fortune in the safe. Of course he didn't believe that himself or he would have got a friend to bid on the safe for him; but his words might turn out true after all."

"They say many a true word is spoken in jest," said Will.

The door opened and in came Broker Watt once more. "Good afternoon, Mr. Watt," said Johnny, with his customary politeness.

"I have come to make you an offer of ten cents on your Henrietta stock," said the visitor, sitting down.

"That's quite a raise from your original one of a cent," replied Long.

"No matter about that. We all try to buy what we want as cheap as we can get it," said the trader, frankly.

"Got any North Dakota copper?" asked Johnny.

"No, but I can get you some if you want it."

"All right. It's going at a dollar. Agree to deliver us 2,000 shares, and knock off your commission, and you can have the Henrietta stock."

"All right," agreed Watt.

"Make out your memorandum then, and when you deliver the copper stock we'll hand over the mining shares."

The deal was made in the usual form, and Watt went away.

"I hope he's satisfied now," said Johnny.

"I thought we were going to hold on to Henrietta till it amounted to something?" said Will.

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, old man. Ten cents is a good price for a prospect. Besides, from the copper outlook at present, we are likely to turn our money over to better advantage than by having it tied up in a problematical mine. Suppose North Dakota should go to \$2 a share? We'd double our money right away. There is more chance of that happening than of Henrietta going to 20 cents."

"But North Dakota might drop to fifty cents, where it was two weeks ago."

"It might; but that is the chance we have to take when we speculate."

Will had nothing further to say, and soon afterward they closed up for the day.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SETH HARKER, OF SULLIVAN COUNTY.

On the following afternoon the 2,000 shares of North Dakota copper Johnny bought on the Curb were delivered to the firm and paid for, and shortly afterward Watt sent in his 2,000 shares and Will turned over to his boy the 20,000 shares of Henrietta in payment.

The copper stock had gone up to \$1.10 that day, which made their two purchases worth \$4,400.

As the firm had \$600 in cash on hand Johnny and Will were now worth \$5,000.

This was quite a rise in their financial status, for they had commenced business about a month since on a capital of \$1,600.

"We are doing pretty well, don't you think, Johnny?" said Will, when the senior partner came in a little later and looked at the copper shares.

"First rate for beginners. By the way, I heard a man offer ten cents on the Curb for Henrietta."

"If fifty had been offered it wouldn't do us any good now."

"No. I hope you aren't worrying over it."

"Not at all. I'm satisfied that you did the right thing in exchanging it for active copper stock."

"Looks like it when we have made \$400 on it in twenty-four hours."

The door opened and a man with an agricultural look came in.



"How do you do, sir. What can I do for you?" asked Johnny.

"Is Mr. Long in?"

"Yes, sir; that's my name."

"Are yew the broker whose name is on the door?"

"Yes, sir."

"Gosh blame me, but yer're hardly more than a boy."

"That don't count in Wall Street. It's brains."

"You dew look kind of smart, I'll allow. My name is Seth Harker. I live up in Sullivan County, on a farm. I'm kinder interested in Wall Street, though my old woman says it's a den of roarin' bulls and bears. I've told her that the bulls are them chaps that boom prices, while the bears are the fellows who make their money when things are on the run."

"You've got it straight, Mr. Harker," nodded Johnny.

"Sure I have. I make it my business to keep posted. Well, I seen your advt. in a financial paper and I come daown to see yew abaout some stocks—minin' shares—I bought of a summer boarder two years ago. He was a slick talker, that there fellow was. His name was Sharp-ley. He let me have the stock as a special favor, and I was fool enough to believe what he said. I paid him five cents a share for 1,000 shares. That was \$50 of my good money he got aout of my jeans, and I hain't heard the last of it to this day from my old woman."

"He sold you worthless shares, then?"

"I'll allow that he sold me good. Some weeks after-ward I writ a broker about 'em, and he writ back that the stock warn't no good at all. He said the mine was a dead one. Naow what is a dead mine?"

Johnny explained the meaning of the expression.

"I take it he was a swindler to impose on me the way he did. But what brought me daown to York is this: I read somethin' in the paper day afore yesterday abaout that mine. Seemed to me as if somethin' was doin' in it. P'raps yew kin tell me."

"What's the name of the mine?"

"The Henrietta."

"Is that the stock the summer boarder sold you?"

"I reckon it is. Here are the docyments, ten of 'em, which calls for 100 shares each," said the farmer, handing Johnny an oblong envelope.

The boy broker took the certificates out and found they were Henrietta.

"I can congratulate you, Mr. Harker. When you bought that stock for a nickel a share you were certainly swindled, for it wasn't worth more than a cent, if that much. The unexpected, however, has happened since. The mine has lately come to life, and it is probable you can sell your shares for double what you paid for them."

"Yew don't mean that, dew yew?" gasped the astonished farmer.

"I do. In fact, we will give you \$100 for that stock ourselves, and take the chances of getting the money back."

"Well, this is a surprise, gosh blame me ef it isn't. What a laugh I'll have on the old woman. So yew'll give me \$100 for it?"

"Yes, sir. We sold 20,000 shares of it yesterday that we got for nothing for ten cents a share, so I guess we are not taking much risk in buying your 1,000."

"Twenty thousand! And yew got 'em for nothin'? Yew must have made a good thing."

"Two thousand dollars clear profit is pretty good."

"So it is. Yew fellows must be rich. Yew've got a fine office here, and to think yew are only boys. Boys must be diff'rent kind of critters in York to what they are in the country. Naow, my son, Cyrus, he's purty

smart, but he daon't look nothin' like yew two, even when he's got a b'iled shirt and his store clothes on. Yew two look slicker'n blazes 'longside of him. He wanted to come daown to York with me, but his mother wouldn't have it nohow. She wasn't sure it was safe for me to come. She said them bulls and bears might dew things to me," and the farmer haw-hawed.

Johnny and Will joined in the laugh.

"Well, Mr. Harker, do you want to sell that stock for \$100?" asked Johnny.

"Dew I? Yew can't hand aout the long green too quick for me."

"Very well. Will, get the money from the safe."

Johnny wrote out the order for the sale of the stock and asked the farmer to sign it.

He did so and also affixed his John Hancock to a receipt for the money.

"I'm right glad I called on yew boys. I'd sooner dew business with smart chaps like yew than most folks. When I shake them bills under the old woman's nose she'll have fit. She won't say nothin' more to me abaout stocks ag'in. Do yew know I feel real perky after this here sale, just as if I could go aout and paint the taown," and the farmer chuckled.

"You'd better not, Mr. Barker. The chances are you'd find yourself in the station house in the morning dead broke," said Johnny, solemnly.

"Why, don't yew think I kin take care of myself? Ain't I old enough?"

"You are a stranger in the city, and you'd be a mark for the sharpers."

"Yew mean them fellers that come up to yew and say, 'How dew yew dew, Mr. Smith. I'm right glad to see yew in taown. How aire all the folks up in Skowhegan?'" and the farmer chuckled knowingly.

"I see you're on to one of the traps; but that's an old one. There are lots of others. Where are you stopping over night?"

"The Astor House, up on Broadway. A gosh blamed big hotel, ain't it?"

"Oh, that's small alongside the modern ones uptown."

"Is that so? I should like to see one of them new ones. Are they as tall as them skyscrapers daown here?"

"Pretty near, and much wider."

"Well, well; I'll have to see one so I kin tell the old woman and the neighbors. And I want to go to a show—a real theater. I've read a lot abaout 'em. They hev a hull string on 'em in this taown. Say, couldn't one of yew chaps take me araound and show me the elephant? I'll make it worth your while. I don't mind spendin' a dollar or two havin' a good time. I ain't likely to come to York ag'in in a coon's age, and I ought'r make the most of this trip."

"Showing the elephant is rather out of our line, Mr. Harker," laughed Johnny. "He's rather a 'dangerous beast, and must be handled with gloves."

"Yew don't say!"

"Neither my partner nor myself would care to escort you around on such a mission. And we would advise you, for your own interest, not to ask anybody else to undertake the job. Your visit to the city so far has been fortunate. You've sold some stock that you thought was worthless for double what you paid for it. You want to take that money back home with you and not run the chance of losing it. I think you'd better let us take you around to the branch post-office, where you can buy two money orders, payable to yourself, for \$50 each. That will only cost you 36 cents. Or you can put your money



in one of our envelopes and direct it to yourself, and have the letter registered. That will cost you 12 cents, including the postage. In either case your money will surely arrive at your country post-office and you'll get it there. You might lose it, or it might be stolen from you."

"I'll dew as yew say. It's real kind of yew to suggest it."

"Very well. Will you send it by registered letter?"

"Any way yew say."

Johnny took an envelope and wrote Mr. Seth Harker on it.

"What's your post-office address?"

The farmer told him, and he completed the address.

"Put your money in that and seal it up."

The farmer did so.

"Now come with us."

The boys took him to the nearby branch post-office and the letter was duly registered.

"Now your \$100 is safe, Mr. Harker," said Johnny.

"Glad to hear it. Dew yew boys drink?"

"No, sir, we do not."

"P'raps yew smoke?"

"We don't smoke, either."

The farmer looked surprised and a bit disappointed.

"I'd like to stand treat the worst way for yew hev done me a big favor."

"If you want to take a drink we'll go a glass of soda with you," said Johnny.

"Will yew. Come on. Where'll we find a tavern 'raound here?"

"We'll go down on Broad street to the Empire Cafe."

"Caffay! Is that what they call taverns in York?" asked the farmer.

"It's a sort of tony name for a saloon."

The boys piloted Harker into the Empire.

"Gosh! This here is a bang-up place, ain't it?" said Harker.

"What'll you have?" asked the barkeeper.

The farmer scratched his chin whiskers.

"I think I'd like one of them high balls I've heard abaout. Be it safe for me to take one?" he asked Johnny.

"I guess you can stand one all right," laughed the boy broker.

"Mister, yew kin give me a high ball."

The barkeeper smiled and winked at the boys.

"Two plain sodas for us," said Johnny.

"When I tell my old woman I had a high ball in a caffay she won't know what I'm a-talkin' abaout," chuckled the farmer. "I'm rayther glad Cyrus didn't come with me. He might want a high ball, too."

The farmer liked the high ball so well that he ordered another, and drank it with great relish.

Then they walked out.

"We'll see you as far as your hotel, as it's right on our way," said Johnny. "Have you been to the Battery?"

"No; where is that? I've heard tell of it."

"We'll take you down there if you want to see it."

"I'd like to, first rate."

So they walked down to the Battery and on the way the boys pointed out all the important buildings.

"That's Bowling Green," said Will, pointing to a triangular square at the foot of Broadway.

"Gosh! Yaw don't say? When I was a boy I had a pictur' in one of my school books of Bowlin' Green, and a bunch of men with cocked hats and short breeches pullin' a statue of King George the three times off'n a stand. Is this the place?"

They assured him that it was the identical spot.

He stood and looked at it with open mouth.

They finally got him down on the Battery, showed him around, and then walked up to the Astor House with him.

"Say, yew fellers are all right," he said, shaking them by the hand. "I hope yew'll find time next summer to come aout to my place and stay a week. It sha'n't cost yew a cent, and I'll show yew araound the country. My old woman and Cyrus will be right glad to see yer."

"We might come, Mr. Harker, but we'll pay our board if we do," said Johnny.

"No yew won't pay a blamed cent," insisted the farmer. "By the way, kin I find my way to a theater to-night?"

"Take the uptown car that passes this hotel. It will carry you right into the theater district. What show are you thinking of going to?"

"I don't know one from t'other; but I'd like to see one of them pieces that has a lot of purty gals in it with short skirts," and the farmer chuckled.

"I guess you want to patronize a musical comedy. Ask the conductor to let you out at Wallack's. There's a good one on there."

"All right. I'll dew it."

"And when you come out of the theater be careful to get on a downtown care. You may get confused, so you'd better ask a policeman to put you on one. Now, good-by. Hope you have a good time and get home all right."

And so the boys parted with Mr. Harker.

## CHAPTER X.

### LONG & CO.'S COUPS IN COPPER.

Two days passed and then the firm received a letter from Seth Harker.

The old farmer's pothooks were not very intelligible, for he could handle a plow better than a pen, but Johnny, who opened the letter, managed to translate the contents after some trouble.

The farmer said he had got home all right and got his registered letter.

He showed "the old woman" the money and had the laugh on her.

She took the surprise better than he had anticipated, congratulated him on his good fortune, and then struck him for half of the money to buy new "fixings" with.

He compromised the matter with \$25, and then gave Cyrus \$5 to blow in on himself.

He said he went to Wallack's Theater and was tickled clear down to his boots.

He declared that "the gals were purtier than peaches, and all-fired slick on their feet."

He ended by inviting the boys once more to visit his farm at any time.

If they'd send him word when they were coming he promised to meet them at the station with his light wagon.

Johnny read the letter to his partner, and Will declared that Farmer Harker was all to the good, a sentiment which the head of the firm shared with him.

That day North Dakota copper went up to \$2.50, which gave the boys a prospective profit of \$6,000 on their 4,000 shares.

Next day a rumor that the Jux Brothers, the copper kings of Wall street, were at the back of the rise, gave the stock another boost and it touched \$3.

It was said they had acquired the mine and proposed to push it in connection with their other copper properties.



The rumor was not officially denied because neither of the brothers Jux were in the city.

Their representatives had nothing to say on the subject, and so the statement obtained some credence, and a further boom to \$3.50 resulted.

For several days North Dakota copper was the chief stock traded in on the Curb, and the price went up to \$6.25.

The boy brokers were jubilant, and wondered how high it was likely to go.

They were already over \$21,000 ahead, and such luck almost made their heads swim.

Everybody in the street believed the price of North Dakota would go to \$10 at least.

If it did the boy brokers figured that they would make \$36,000.

At one o'clock that day Johnny dropped into the Empire Cafe for his lunch.

A bang-up meal was served in that saloon to the brokers, who were the chief patrons.

Johnny found the place crowded and had to wedge himself into a small space behind one of the private dining booths.

While eating he overheard snatches of the talk that was taking place in the booth close to him.

A party of big brokers were there, and Johnny learned that Nathan Jux had just returned from Montana and intended to send out that afternoon an official denial of his or his brother's connection with the North Dakota copper mine.

Johnny knew there would be a big drop in the price as soon as the statement reached the Curb.

He gulped down the balance of his lunch and hastened out of the cafe.

Rushing up to a broker he knew inside the roped-off enclosure he gave him the order to sell his 4,000 shares of North Dakota at once.

When the broker offered the stock a rush was made for him, and it was gobbled up in four lots of 1,000 shares in no time.

"Thank goodness we're out of it, and at the top of the market," thought the boy as he sauntered back to his office.

Will was out and Johnny sat down to peruse a mining paper.

Nearly an hour passed and then Will came rushing in, greatly excited.

"What's the matter, Will?" asked the head of the firm, coolly.

"Matter!" cried Will. "North Dakota has gone to smash, and the Curb is in a panic. For heaven's sake go out and sell those shares before we lose all of our profit!"

"What shares, dear boy?" replied Johnny, leaning back in his chair.

"What shares? Why, North Dakota, of course. What are you staring at? Why don't you get a move on?"

"Really, I'm too tired to go out again right away."

Will gasped.

"Say, are you crazy?" he almost shouted.

"I hope not. I feel about the same as usual."

"Then why don't you make a rush and get rid of the stock. Didn't you hear me say that North Dakota has gone to smash?"

"I should be deaf if I couldn't hear you. Don't shout that way, or you'll make the neighbors think we are engaged in a free fight."

"Say——"

"That'll do. Don't worry about North Dakota. I sold

the shares an hour ago at \$6.35. We have made a profit of \$21,000. Now sit down and recover your composure."

"Have you really sold them? Oh, Lord, what a relief! Why in thunder didn't you say so at once and not let me go on like a crazy Indian?"

"You were giving such an excellent performance of a wild man that I hated to spoil the show," grinned Johnny.

"It might have been funny to you, but it wasn't to me," growled Will.

"Forget it, my dear fellow, and shake hands with yourself. We are now worth \$23,500."

"And we haven't been in business two months. What will we be worth when we have been running two years?"

"Don't ask me. We may be dead broke."

"Broke! Pooh! Are we a lucky Wall Street firm or aren't we?"

"At present we appear to be lucky—uncommonly so. I said we were worth \$23,500. I forgot to include the Henrietta shares we bought from the farmer. They are worth a hundred, and then there's the \$100 we have out on the ink plant. That makes \$200 more."

"And we musn't forget the possibility of another of those bonehead companies turning up a winner," said Will, animatedly.

"Until one of them does they're dead ones, and not worth the paper on which——"

"They're printed. Say, we have funds enough now to do something with the ink proposition."

"Yes. I think we'd better get busy with it. To-morrow I'll visit the six stockholders who are in it to the tune of 5,000 shares each."

"How much are you going to offer them for their holdings?"

"Maybe a cent a share cash."

"Holy smoke! Fifty dollars for stock that cost them \$1,250. They'll throw you out."

"What do you think the stock is worth, anyway, as the company stands?"

"Nothing."

"Isn't \$50 better than nothing?"

"What's \$50 to them? They're all well off."

"Well, if they don't want to sell I'll get Fenton to call a meeting with a view to raising funds. I'll bet they'll prefer to take \$50 and get out than stay in and put up several times that to push a bankrupt proposition."

"If we buy those men out for \$300, that will be \$400 we're in on the company. Then we'll have to finance it, and that may cost us \$1,000 more. Suppose, after all, we can't get a market for the ink, where will we land?"

"What are you kicking about now? You're the one who proposed to push this matter. Are you getting cold feet?"

"No, I was only thinking."

"You make a lot of noise about it. You don't hear me when I'm thinking. If we buy out these shareholders we'll own 40,000 shares of the capital stock. If we finance the company we'll begin by buying the 14,000 shares in the treasury at say ten cents a share. That will give us the control and put \$1,400 in the treasury. You can present your father with 1,000 shares, and I'll give my uncle the same. Then there will be five shareholders. We'll call a meeting and I must be elected president, you secretary and treasurer, and Fenton, vice-president. Then we'll get busy and see what we can make of the concern," said Johnny.

"That will be first-rate."

(Continued on page 20)



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## GOOD STORIES.

Hand embroidery, as it is done in some parts of Ireland, cannot be satisfactorily imitated by machinery, and is a cottage industry of importance. Irish art needlework is of the best quality, and will bear favorable comparison with any produced in Europe.

Havana imports its granite paving blocks from Norway, getting them cheaper than it can from any American port. It is said that the low Norwegian freight rates, and the low cost of material, prevent competition.

A phonograph dealer in a Hungarian town has been so annoyed by the singing of the girls in a dressmaker's workshop that adjoined his quarters, that he filled one of his instruments with swear words and set it to work when the girls were all assembled at their labors. The defense that he was only "testing new records" did not save him from having to pay damages. He would have found it cheaper to buy a parrot!

It is wrong, as well as a display of ignorance, to hold up a fainting person, and especially to keep the head erect. Fainting is caused by a want of blood in the brain, the heart failing to act with sufficient force to send the blood against the laws of gravitation. If, then, you place a person sitting, whose heart has nearly ceased to beat, his brain will fail to receive blood; if you lay him down with the head lower than the heart, blood will run into the brain by the mere force of gravity, and in fainting, in sufficient quantity, generally, to restore consciousness.

The latest freak newspaper hails from Madrid, and provides its readers with letterpress that can be read in the dark. The ink is prepared with some preparation of phosphorus. If the method became popular the sensation mongering editor might take undue advantage of this "writing in fire" to emphasize his most lurid headlines. But, after all, the Spanish journalist's appeal is only to the eye, whereas a French journal has gone one better and prints its columns with strictly innocuous ink, on thin sheets of dough, which can be eaten when read, so that the publication can be a feast in a double sense, and food for mind and body alike. To such departures does an up-to-date press commit itself.

The latest attraction at Carl Hagenbeck's famous animal park at Stellingen, near Hamburg, is a series of representations of the great monsters that inhabited this earth in the

distant past. In all thirty have been erected, but more are to follow. These beasts are depicted standing by the water's edge amid the shrubs and trees, while in the lake itself are shown huge crocodiles and strange-looking creatures half fish and half mammal. Additional realism is added by representing a few of the beasts in the act of battling with specimens of their kind. There are several representations of the dinosaurs, including the iguanodon, which towers some twenty-five feet into the air, making the trees around look quite small; the diplodocus, whose length of 66 feet and height of 18 feet render the modern elephant a mere pygmy; the stegosaurus, with its bony plates on its back and spikes on its tail; the triceratops, with its three horns on its face and huge collar of spikes around its neck, as well as representations of the sloth, dodo and mammoth. Then there are huge flying reptiles with an enormous spread of wings, birds with formidable teeth, not to mention giant lizards, tortoises and toads, compared to which the present living specimens are in size no more than a dog to a cart horse. Some of these tortoises and toads are twelve feet and more in length.

## JOKES AND JESTS.

He—This collection of stuffed birds is said to be worth hundreds of dollars. She—Is it possible? What are they stuffed with?

Brown—What have you got against that man Smith? He has done several good things. Jones—Yes, but I happened be one of them.

"I'd like to exchange these cigars." "Something lighter, madam?" "Yes. My husband says they're too heavy. Give me some that weigh about half as much."

Mrs. Passy—Everybody says my daughter got her beauty from me. What do you say to that. Mr. Witts—Well, I think it was very unkind of her to take it from you.

Woman With the Sun Bonnet—If anybody asks me what I know about you I shall tell 'em the exact truth. Woman With the Gingham Apron—If you do, Mag Parkins, as sure as I'm standin' here, I'll sue you for slander!

"I must say," complained the woman tourist, "that I don't understand why people come to this hotel—no scenery, no amusement, no good cuisine, no"— "Pardon, madame," interrupted the host, "but we have ze gr-ran' label to stick on ze baggage."

"Say, Mayme, did you ever have any turtle soup?" asked the raw-boned youth of the girl beside him. "No," admitted the maiden; "but," added she, with the conscious dignity of one who has not been lacking in social experience, "I've been where it was."

First Citizen (Golden Gulch)—"Waal, we caught up with the feller wot stole your new overcoat an' lynched him." Second Citizen—"Ha, ha! that's somethin' like. Teach these coyotes they've gotter obey the laws o' the land. Hung him, eh?" "No, we shot him full of holes." "Gee whittaker! He didn't have my overcoat on, did he?" "Jerusalem, partner, come to think, I'm 'fraid he did." "Ye oughter be arrested, every one of ye. This 'ere lynch law is a disgrace ter civilization."



## IN THE SEWERS OF PARIS.

By D. W. Stevens

It is true a descent into the sewers of Paris does not sound attractive, particularly when there are so many more agreeable ways of spending an hour or two elsewhere; but as a curiosity the sight is unsurpassed. The rendezvous on our card was named the Place du Chatelet, opposite the theater. The morning was fine but sultry, and the prospect of a storm loomed in the immediate future. This, be it noticed in passing, only added to the weird charm of the subterranean voyage we were about to undertake. By half-past ten o'clock our exploring party had assembled on the spot. It was a motley group of tourists, some thirty strong, and one-third ladies. I need hardly tell you they were nearly all Americans. The most interesting among them were a dissenting parson and his wife. They seemed a strangely-matched couple. He was tall, thin and taciturn; she was short, fat and talkative; so my facetious friend at once christened them Don Quixote and Sarah Gamp. They were both well-armed for the expedition; the lady bore a large bottle of eau de Cologne, and the gentleman a family-sized brandy flask, and with the two they evidently felt themselves safe. I must add that the majority of the party had provided themselves with scent or cordial of some kind in view of coming dangers.

After waiting half an hour—for French, official or unofficial, are never punctual—our guide, philosopher and friend arrived. He was a little man, dressed in black, with a white choker, just as if he were going to a wedding or the opera. He belonged, I believe, to the Ponts de Chaussees department of the municipal administration. Anyhow, he was evidently accustomed to inspection, for he examined our tickets, and eyed our persons as if we were so many Guy Fawkses, bent on blowing up the town. This done, he ordered his men to open the large iron-plated trap which leads to the nether regions, and, descending the steps, invited us to follow. The critical moment had now approached. The ladies felt for their handkerchiefs and smelling bottles, the gentlemen lit up their cigars or "nipped" at their flasks, and, casting strange glances at one another, they all silently and solemnly, one by one, in Indian file, went down. But great was their surprise and intense their delight when they got below. Instead of the horrid dark continent they had pictured drainage-land to be, they found themselves in a large, clean, well-lit vault, which may be described as a kind of station conducting to the various sewers that intersect the quarter. We were under the city of Paris.

Our attention was drawn to a number of small open cars that were shunted on rails into the vault from a dark siding. The wonderment of the company was now almost complete. The cars were of polished oak, with bright brass trimmings, and were lit up at the corners with elegant lamps bearing white globes. We were at once requested to mount. My friend and I jumped into the car at the head of the train, determined at any risk to be the first to enter the mysterious kingdom of pipes and arches. The next second the whistle sounded for our departure. And away we went at a smart pace right into the central drain, which runs beneath the Rue de Rivoli. The arch is about four yards wide. The drain proper takes up seven or eight feet, and there is a curbing on either side of two feet. The two rails on which the train moves are laid down on the edge of these curbings. The train is towed by men who run along the narrow footpaths with marvelous dexterity. It is true, if they fell into the dirty water they would not be drowned, for it is not deep, and there is lit-

tle danger save during the floods, when the drain is turned into a roaring torrent. As we glide along, we are more and more struck with the sweetness of the sewer. I have been through many and many a railway tunnel far more disagreeable. The walls are kept clean, and all the pipes which run through it—and there are all sorts and all sizes—are neatly painted. What also strikes us is, that down here we can find out where we are just as easily as we can above. The names of the streets and the number of the houses in the Rue de Rivoli are fixed on the walls in white characters on blue enameled tables, so that there is no fear of even a stranger, if he happens to wander here alone, losing himself.

But what is that large red light which gleams so sinisterly in the murky distance? Surely it can't be another train coming upon the same line! The parson's wife becomes uneasy. She was on the point of fainting, when the assurances of the guide, supplemented by Timothy's flash, brought her back to her senses. No, there was no danger; it was only the stationary light at the end of the sewer, which had just been turned on us for our amusement. As we neared it, our speed slackened, and in a few minutes we halted at another station. Here we were told to descend, and naturally we thought our voyage at an end. But a further surprise was in store.

I found we were under the Place de la Concord. Here there is a larger drain, which, passing under the Rue Royale, leads to the church of Madeleine. But before being introduced to it our guide proceeded to give us an explanation of the hydraulic machinery used at this spot for the raising or lowering of the waters. It was very interesting to hear, but would be dull to read, so we'll pass it over. *En avant, mesdames et messieurs!* and away we marched into the big sewer on the right, where we saw three or four barges—I cannot honestly call them gondolas—floating lazily on the stream. One by one we embarked in them, the ladies being handed down by the grimy-faced, sea-booted captain of the fleet with a grace and gentleness which no waterman in Venice could equal. I am sorry to say the boats were not so clean as the cars we had just left, but our gallant guide at once ordered wrappers to be placed on the seats for the benefit of the ladies.

Everybody being made as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances, we weighed anchor. Each boat was lit up with a large lamp, and towed along by two men. Occasionally we bumped against our neighbor's bark, and now and then there was a rush of water from some siding which acted like a gentle wave and sent us up and down. Our stout lady assured Timothy she began to feel unwell, and the flask was again brought into service. "*N'ayez pas peur, madame,*" said the captain, "*vous n'aurez pas le mal de mer ici.*" ("You will not be seasick here"). On we sailed, gazing at the network of pipes above or looking into the troubled stream below, while the noise of the omnibuses rattled over our heads like muffled thunder, and doubtful springs gurgled forth from small mysterious openings in the sides of the arch. At length we reached the Madeleine, and our boats were moored. The trip was now over. One by one we came up through another large iron-plated trap, and after giving a trifle to the barge-men—who are, of course, strictly forbidden to take fees—we stepped once more into the upper world, having traveled three miles and water under the city of Paris. Timothy was the last person to ascend. As he emerged into the sunlight he opened his mouth for the first time and exclaimed to his better-half, "I hope, my love, you left some brandy in the flask."

## MAKING POST-CARDS.

The village of Castleton, on the east bank of the Hudson River, is about eight miles below Albany. Three-quarters of



a mile north of the village a deep land-cave sets back into the range of hills. From the depot at Castleton a railroad track lies between the regular tracks of the Hudson River Road and the highway till it comes to this cave, and there it curves sharply inland and follows the bank of a crooked stream to a cluster of buildings situated close in the mouth of the ravine. In these buildings all the postal-cards of the United States Government are manufactured.

The most conspicuous feature of the factory, as viewed from the river or railroad trains, is all exceedingly tall, symmetrical brick chimney that rises high against the background of second-growth pines. This has been built in connection with the new steam-power for the paper mill, the creek not being sufficiently constant to drive the works, and, at the same time, furnish the water required in the manufacture of the paper. The plant of the paper mill has long existed here, but the postal-card factory was established at this point since having been removed from Holyoke, Mass.

The paper mill is owned by the Fort Orange Paper Company, and is not confined to the manufacture of cardboard for postal-cards, nor do the latter constitute the largest article of production. The only obligation that mill owners are under to the Government is to supply the postal-card factory with board as fast as it is needed, and of the quantity called for by contract. The Government has no monopoly in the product of the mill. The same quality of cardboard that the Government demands is open to the market. The color of the postal-cards is specified in the contract, but even this the paper mill is at liberty to furnish to any one who may want that particular shade of cardboard. Postal cardboard is made of the best quality of linen and cotton rags, which are treated in all respects, from the rag bale to the calendar roll, as they are for the manufacture of any other cardboard of like quality. A certain quantity of chemical or wood pulp is mixed with the rag, and this is of a quality almost as expensive as rag pulp.

The postal-card factory proper is a new one-story brick building, of very unpretending appearance. In this respect it is in harmony with the process of preparing the cards, for the latter is extremely simple and apparently inexpensive. The cardboard is received from the paper mill in sheets twenty-one inches by thirty, a size just large enough to be cut into forty postal-cards. The sheets are first printed on an ordinary large cylinder "job" printing press, there being in the factory two Hoe presses and one Taylor. The impression is taken on a plate containing forty card faces with stamp, the monogram US, the scroll words "Postal Card," and the untruthful printed line, "Nothing but the address can be placed on this side." Thus, when a sheet of cardboard is run through the press it comes out with forty postal-cards completely printed, ready to be cut up into the one-cent missives with which the public are familiar. Any two of the presses are sufficient to supply the demand without being rushed.

From the presses the printed sheets are taken to a cutting machine, where they are rapidly cut into strips, containing ten cards each. They are fed between rollers, on which there are four circular blades. The cutting into strips is done as fast as a tolerably active boy can pass in the sheets. From the first cutting machine the strips are taken to a second cutter, where they are fed through rollers with circular blades, set as far apart as the width of a postal-card. Thus the cards are produced ready for use from every strip that is run through the cutter. They drop into ten pockets made of tin, and constructed on a shaft. The boy who feeds the strips into the cutter passes twenty-five through and then calls out "tally." Three girls remove the cards from the tin pockets, pack them in stacks of twenty-five each, and wrap each package about with the paper band with which everybody is familiar who

buys his cards in quantities of twenty-five and upward. In addition to emptying the pockets and banding the cards, one of the three girls has to turn the pocket-shaft every time the feeder calls "tally," another has to count the cards in any one pocket, so as to see that the count of the boy who feeds in the strips is correct. Every twenty-five strips produces 250 cards, delivered equally in ten pockets. If any one of them contains twenty-five cards, each of the other nine must contain a like number.

In order to equalize the labor among the three girls, the one who turns the pocket-shaft and the one who counts the contents of one of the pockets empty and pack up each three pockets. The third girl is therefore required to empty and pack up the contents of four pockets, with nothing else to do. The yellow paper band that is wrapped about each package of twenty-five cards is ready gummed, so that the three pocket-tenders are able to work with alacrity, as it is evident that they must do in order to stack up all the postal-cards used in the United States. The packages of twenty-five each are placed in piles of ten each, and two of these piles are packed into a strawboard box, each box thus containing five hundred cards. The strawboard boxes are made rapidly on the spot by an ingenious machine. The whole machinery for making postal-cards, after the cardboard is received from the paper mill, could be operated in a room thirty feet square. This, of course, would not be sufficient for storing material and stock.

The Government agency is in charge of Mr. Alfred Tanner, of Kingston, who has seven clerks and assistants to do the bookkeeping, shipping and supervision. They are employed by the Government under the direction of the Third Assistant Postmaster General. The contractors employ in the card factory proper about twenty persons—men, boys and girls. Managers, employees, and all hands board in the village, which is little more than a mile from the works.

This force produces and packs an average of about 1,250,000 postal-cards each working day. The total product last year was 350,000,000, and as the cards are all made at Castleton factory, the product measures the number of cards used in the country. If the demand at the factory averages 1,250,000 a day, it follows that only an average of one and a quarter card is used daily by every fifty people in the country. This shows a less general use of postal-cards than many might estimate without something like definite data. The rate of increase in the use of cards during the year ended June 30, 1879, over previous years was 13.02 per cent. For the year ended June 30, 1880, the increase was 23 per cent., and for the last fiscal year it was about the same. The increase is believed to be mostly in business quarters, where they are used for advertising. For private correspondence the cards do not seem to be as popular as they were when they were first authorized in this country.

The cost of postal-cards to the Government under the present contract, as compared with the cost under former contracts, is something remarkable, when it is observed that the size and quality are either the same or better. The contract price for four years prior to July 1, 1877, was \$1.39 7-8 per 1,000; for the four years ending June 30, 1881, it was 69.56 cents per 1,000, but under the present contract it is only 54.43 cents per 1,000. Being sold at \$10 per 1,000 to the public, the Government receives \$9.49 1-2 per 1,000 for carrying them broadcast through the mails. A thousand postal-cards weigh six pounds and a quarter, according to the Government's contract. The cost of the agency for salary on agent and assistants was, for the year ending June 30, 1881, \$7,300.

All orders for cards are sent by local postmasters to the Postoffice Department at Washington.



(Continued from page 16.)

"We'll put the name of the company on our door, and that will give it some standing."

"My idea exactly."

"By this programme we stand to lose \$2,000 at least; but unless we venture we might as well throw up the thing now. Fenton has had some success in peddling the stock uptown. That shows it isn't absolutely without some merit. If we can get it on the market it may go, and if it goes the company will make something, and if the company makes a steady profit over its operating expenses we'll get half of it. If we desired to take advantage of our grip and make Fenton give up some of his stock in consideration of putting the company on its feet we could do it, but for my part I don't care to imitate such methods of high finance. I believe giving the poor chap a square deal, even though the risk is on our shoulders. What do you think about it?"

"The same as you. Whatever you say goes with me."

"All right. Let's quit and go home."

That suited Will, so they locked up and left the building.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE MAN FROM THE WEST.

On the following morning when Johnny reached his office he wrote down the names and business addresses of the six shareholders of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co., whom he proposed to interview.

They were all brokers, and personal friends of the late Mr. Jackson.

Johnny did not intend to call on the six shareholders until after three in the afternoon, as he knew they would not care to devote their time to what they would doubtless consider an unprofitable matter.

He put the list in his pocket and then took up the daily market report of the preceding day's operations on the Stock Exchange.

Will came in soon afterward and they had a short talk about things in general.

The junior partner then went up to the little bank to watch the blackboard quotations, and Johnny devoted his attention to Wall Street literature.

About eleven o'clock the door opened and a man walked in.

He had a rough-and-ready appearance, suggestive of the mining regions of the great West.

He looked at Johnny and then around the room.

"I suppose the bosses are out?" he said.

"I am Mr. Long, the head of the firm. What can I do for you?" asked Johnny.

The stranger regarded him with a doubtful look.

"Do you deal in mining stock?" he asked.

"If it is an active stock, listed on the Western exchanges, we do."

"I've got the same answer from half a dozen brokers. None of them will touch the stock I have because they say the mine is a dead one."

"Take a seat, sir, and tell me the name of the mine, also your name. I like to know who I'm talking to."

The stranger sat down.

"My name is James Bunn. I am from the mining regions of Nevada. I am a prospector, and have spent the best years of my life studying the mining regions in different parts of the country for indications of the presence of gold and silver ore. Three times I struck a for-

tune, only to have it wrested from me by unscrupulous mining men. Now I believe I am on the trail of a fourth."

"Well?" said Johnny.

"Some months ago I saved a man's life—I pulled him out of a gully where he was lying helpless with a broken leg. He might have lain there for weeks and died from starvation if I didn't come along and see him. He was grateful, and learning I was a prospector he gave me the only thing he had to give and that was a batch of certificates representing 101,000 shares in an abandoned prospect called the Little Giant."

"The Little Giant!" exclaimed Johnny, with sudden interest.

"Yes. The shares represent a one-third interest in the property. The par value of the stock is \$10, but it never sold higher than 10 cents. Three hundred thousand shares were issued and sold by promoters for development purposes. A shaft was sunk with the money, and tunnels run off in different directions, without result, until the funds gave out. The men at the back of it could do no more. They tried to sell another issue of treasury stock, but no promoter would handle it, and so they had to throw up their hands."

"Evidently the mine was worthless."

"Maybe so, but I have my doubts."

"Ah! On what ground?" asked Johnny, eagerly.

"Because all around the property—east, west, north and south—are some of the best producers in that region."

"That's no evidence that there is paying ore in the prospect in question," replied Johnny, shaking his head. "I say this with due respect for your practical knowledge of mining, because you doubtless know that the course of ore-bearing ledges is very erratic. Wherever a strike in the mining district has been made scores of claims have been taken up around it, and I believe the records will show that most of these adjacent claims have never panned out in a way to warrant the hopes of their owners."

"I'll allow you are right; but I have an idea it's different with the Little Giant," said the visitor.

"Have you gone over the property yourself since you got hold of the stock?"

"I have."

"Have you found any indications of ore that escaped the original owners?"

"No."

"Then why do you think there is anything in the Little Giant?"

"Because, in my opinion, none of the tunnels were pushed far enough to reach the vein I believe run through the ground."

"Well, what was your object in coming to New York? To try and interest somebody in a project to push the tunnels further? I should imagine that you would have done better in Goldfield, or Tonopah, or some other mining center, where there are moneyed men always looking around for possibilities."

"I want nothing to do with those people," said Mr. Bunn, energetically. "They are the men who robbed me of three fortunes. If I demonstrated that there was ore in the Little Giant they would do me again."

"I don't see how they could take your stock away from you without your consent," said Johnny.

"They couldn't; but they wouldn't make a move without I made it to their interest. They'd get me to sign papers that looked innocent enough on their face, but which contained some loophole that would place me at their mercy. Three different kinds of games have been worked upon me.



Each took a fortune out of my hands, and I was left in the lurch."

"Couldn't you appeal to the law of the State?"

"Twice I did, but I was beaten, because the men had money, and though I won out in the trial court they carried the cases to higher judges, and in the end I had no money to continue the fight, and so I was beaten out."

"That was too bad."

"It was outrageous! But without money a man has no chance in the world."

"What did you expect to do in New York? There is no market here for dead stock. You couldn't pay a day's board in a hotel with your 101,000 shares of Little Giant."

"I came to New York to see a man named Howard Jackson, a Wall Street broker."

"I'm afraid you won't see him. He died about three months ago. This was his office, and I worked for him before starting out for myself."

The caller did not seem to be surprised.

"I was told he was dead by the first broker I called on. When I called on Broker Watt, on this floor, and tried to interest him, he said he was too busy to waste any time on dead propositions. He told me to call on you. He said you had a bunch of Little Giant shares which you bought from the Jackson estate. Was he right?"

"Yes."

"Mr. Jackson, according to the company's books, held at one time 100,000 shares, or a third interest in the mine. Have you got the whole block, or only a part of it?"

"We have the whole block," replied Johnny.

A look of satisfaction came over the Westerner's face.

"I am glad to hear it, for between us we control the mine, and maybe you'll be willing to help me push its development further on the chance that it might pan out a winner."

"Long & Co. is open to the consideration of any proposition that looks promising. What facts and figures have you to back up your application for capital to further develop the Little Giant?"

"I will show you, but I must admit I have no convincing evidence to prove that a vein of paying ore runs through the property," said Bunn.

"Never mind that. I like your honesty at any rate. Most persons in your position would swear they had positive knowledge of a pay streak, even if they were unable to prove the fact in the slightest way. Go ahead and let me have the truth about the Little Giant. Did you bring a map of the district, which shows the position of the prospect to the mines about?"

"Yes," replied Bunn, taking a bulky envelope from his pocket.

"And a diagram of the property, showing the location of the shaft and the run of the tunnels?"

"Yes."

"Any buildings and machinery?"

"There's a rough oblong shanty near the mouth of the shaft, which contains a small donkey-engine used for hoisting the dirt out of the mine. The derrick is in position over the shaft, and the rope, buckets, picks, shovels, barrows and other articles, including half a dozen hand drills, are stored in the shanty. There is also a light wagon in a closed shed adjoining the shanty, with a small quantity of lumber bought to shore up the roof and sides of the tunnels. There is nothing else of importance."

The prospector spread out the map of the district first.

The position of the Little Giant was marked in red ink on it.

All around the property, though at some little distance,

were producing mines well known in the mining world. Most of them were being operated by leasing companies.

Bunn showed a booklet in which was printed statistics concerning those mines, and the figures were encouraging.

He also exhibited a certified copy of the deed as recorded in the county records, and other documents connected with the prospect.

Then he showed the drawings of the property itself, with the positions of the shaft and the tunnels carefully outlined, with their depth, length and other measurements, marked down.

Bunn then described the general character of the country around about, showing where it was particularly hilly, and where comparatively level.

In fact, after a two hours' interview, Johnny had as good an idea of the Little Giant mine and its surroundings as it was possible for one to get at second hand.

"Where are you stopping, Mr. Bunn?" he asked.

"At the Astor House."

"All right. I'll have a talk with my partner this afternoon about this matter, and we will consider what steps, if any, we care to take with a view to the further development of the property. Drop in to-morrow afternoon after three and I will introduce you to Mr. Waters, and if there are any other points we would like to know you can make them plain to us."

The prospector nodded, and took his departure, apparently well satisfied with the encouragement he had received, leaving all the documents with Johnny so that he could fully explain everything to his business associate.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BUYING IN THE IMPERIAL INVISIBLE INK CO.'S STOCK.

When Will got back, after taking his lunch, Johnny astonished him with the particulars of the visit of James Bunn, prospector.

"Gracious!" exclaimed the junior partner. "Do you think there's anything in the Little Giant mine?"

"I couldn't tell you. Bunn doesn't really know himself, but he firmly believes there is."

"Lord! This is the third of our boneheads to attract attention. Say, I have an idea there may be a future in the mine."

"What makes you think so?"

"Because we seem to be a lucky firm."

"We are certainly lucky to make over \$20,000 in two months, but that isn't saying that our luck is going to continue."

"Oh, I don't know. I feel it in my bones that we will be millionaires yet."

"I hope so, but millionaires don't spring up in a night, as a rule. Here, let me explain these diagrams and other documents to you, and then you'll understand more about the Little Giant."

Johnny took about half an hour in putting his partner in possession of all the facts.

"Now I'm going to lunch. I'll leave you to pore over the papers, and make yourself more familiar with the matter. I told Bunn to call to-morrow after three, so you could meet him, and hear what more he has to say on the subject."

Then the senior partner put on his hat and went out.

He didn't come back till three, and remained only long enough to tell Will that he was going to visit one or more



of the six stockholders of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. He went direct to the office of George Fuller, a Curb broker, sent in his name, and was admitted.

Fuller knew Johnny as the late Mr. Jackson's messenger and junior clerk, and had heard that the boy had gone into the brokerage business in his late employer's office.

He took the information as a joke, and thought nothing more about it.

"Hello, Johnny," he said, offering his hand. "Sit down. Haven't seen you since Mr. Jackson died. What are you doing?"

"There's my card, Mr. Fuller," said the boy, handing him one.

"Long & Co., stocks and bonds," read the trader, with a smile. "So you are in business for yourself? I heard you had started out in Jackson's office, but I didn't take any stock in it. Doing anything?"

"Don't I look prosperous?"

"Yes, but that's no evidence of business success."

"That's right. Anybody with the price can fit himself out in good clothes, a watch and chain, and other things. Some of the Wall Street clerks put on a sweller front than their bosses. But, in answer to your question, I will say that Long & Co. is doing extremely well for a new firm. We have made more money in two months than most people make in two years."

"You don't say. Glad to hear you are so fortunate. How are you making it?"

"Taking a flyer now and then in the market. For instance, we bought 4,000 shares of North Dakota copper the other day just before the boom, and sold out at \$6.35. That's going some, isn't it?"

"I should say," said the broker, opening his eyes. "You were smart to get out at the top of the market."

"There's nothing slow about Long & Co. Well, let's get down to business."

"Business? Did you call on business?"

"I haven't time to make social calls during business hours."

"Good!" laughed Fuller. "Proceed."

"I hope you won't fall off of your chair when I tell you my business."

"I guess not. I'm pretty well anchored in it."

"I believe you are a stockholder in a corporation called the Imperial Invisible Ink Co."

"Say, don't mention that fake. That was the one thing that made me sore on Jackson. He got me into it to the tune of 5,000 shares, for which I paid \$1,250. The promoter was a man named Fenton, who assured us there was a fortune in his patent. We made him president, or rather he made himself president, for he held the controlling interest. Then he put his brother-in-law in as treasurer. The fellow was a rascal, and ran away with all the funds of the company."

"You mean the brother-in-law?"

"Of course. That put the kibosh on the corporation, and I've heard no more about it."

"The plant, a small one, is situated in a top loft on Grand street," said Johnny. "Fenton has been trying to support himself by making the ink and peddling it on the street. He was on his last legs when I met him, and advanced him \$100 on the plant."

"You advanced him \$100?"

"The firm did."

"What for?"

"Well, you see we've got hold of Mr. Jackson's 10,000 shares in the company, and our idea was to protect it till we saw whether there was a future in the ink."

"What did you pay for the shares?"

"Practically nothing. I bought his safe with a lot of worthless certificates of stock in it, and those shares were among the junk."

"Oh, I see; but I think you were a fool to advance \$100 good money on such a scaley proposition."

"Oh, I guess the plant is good for it, or most of it."

"Well, why have you come to see me about that fizzle?"

"I wanted to find out if you were willing to help put the company on its feet again."

"No, sir," replied the broker, rather forcibly. "I'm through with it."

"What are you going to do with the stock, then?"

"What can I do with a bunch of waste paper? I threw it into that closet six months ago. I suppose it's there yet."

"What do you want for it?"

"Do you want to buy it?"

"I'll take it on a chance if you let it go cheap enough."

"Make a bid."

"Twenty-five dollars."

"Hand over the twenty-five and pick it out."

"There's the money. Now write me out a transfer to Long & Co."

"Say, Johnny, if this is the way you and your partner are doing business you're lucky if you don't see your finish."

"Don't you worry, Mr. Fuller. We'll be alive and kicking when some other people are eating snowballs."

"Are you referring to me, you young rascal," laughed the trader.

"Certainly not. Present company always excepted."

"There's your transfer. May it do you some good—twenty-five dollars' worth, at any rate. Now go and fish your property out of the dust. I'm glad to be rid of it. It's a wonder I didn't throw it out."

"By not doing so you are \$25 ahead."

"That will pay for drinks and cigars for a week."

"Better invest it in candy for your wife," said Johnny, as he pulled the certificates off a shelf, knocked off the dust, and shoved them into his pocket.

Having finished his business he bade Broker Fuller good afternoon and left the office.

He next called on Broker Stevenson.

This gentleman was busy and had no time to waste in conversation, so Johnny stated why he had called.

Stevenson had no desire to continue his connection with the bankrupt ink company, and said so in no uncertain terms.

"Want to sell your stock?"

"Who wants it?"

"I'll take it at bargain-counter rates."

"You can have it for \$100."

"Too high. I'll give you \$25."

Stevenson said something more emphatic than polite and then roared "No!"

"All right. Good afternoon," replied Johnny and left.

He visited two more of the stockholders, but found they had gone home for the day, so he returned to the office.

He reported to Will the result of his negotiations with the two brokers, and put the 5,000 shares of I. I. I. Co. in the safe.

"So Stevenson wanted \$100 for his stock?" said Will.

"Yes, and I offered him \$25," replied Johnny.

Will laughed.

"Your nerve seems to be in good working order," he said.



"Pooh! Twenty-five is as much or more than it's worth at the present moment."

"I know; but \$25 is nothing to a man of Stevenson's standing. He'd sooner throw those certificates in the waste basket than sell them for that."

"He can do that for all I care."

"When are you going to call on the others?"

"Day after to-morrow. To-morrow afternoon we have a date with Bunn."

As it was half past four the boys quit for the day.

At ten next morning Will started for the little bank, leaving Johnny at his desk.

Fifteen minutes later there came a gentle knock on the door.

"Come in," said Johnny, and in came a remarkable pretty and modest-looking girl.

"Do you employ a stenographer?" asked the fair visitor.

"Looking for a job?" asked the boy broker.

"Yes. I am a good bookkeeper, too," she said.

"Sit down, Miss——"

"My name is Miss Grant."

"Where were you last employed?" asked Johnny.

The young lady explained that she had been working for an insurance broker who had gone out of business.

She had been looking around for another position for about two weeks.

"Well, Miss Grant, we—I am Mr. Long of this firm—have nothing to offer you, but if you will leave me your address I will write you if I hear of something in your line."

"Thank you, Mr. Long. That is very kind of you," said the girl.

"Don't mention it. By the way, why wouldn't it be a good idea for you to act as an independent stenographer and typist. There are several persons on this floor who haven't enough work to employ a girl right along and are obliged to hire one by the hour from the outside. Now, suppose you were to take desk-room with us—we wouldn't charge you anything, for you could take charge of the office for us when we were both out—and go around among the people in the building who have no regular stenographer and agree, for a certain price, to do whatever work they wanted? Would you like that?"

"I think I would, but unfortunately I cannot afford to buy a typewriter," replied Miss Grant.

"You can rent one for \$3 a month. I'll agree to rent it for a month for you to give you a start, and you can use that table yonder. If things don't pan out to suit you I'll look up a job for you in some broker's office. Or it is possible we may find use for your services ourselves, as we are interested in putting a certain enterprise on its feet. It may be in running order within a month, and it is quite possible we shall need somebody to look after the books and the general details of the business," said Johnny.

So matters were arranged between the boy broker and the young lady for her to come to the office on the following day, when he promised to have a machine ready for her, and some business cards for her to circulate around the building.

When Will came in later on Johnny told him about Miss Grant and the arrangement he had made with her.

Will had no objection to offer, and thought it was a good idea to have the young lady on hand, for it was not unlikely they would need her services themselves in the near future.

At a quarter past three the prospector appeared and Johnny introduced him to his partner.

The three then had a long and serious talk about the

Little Giant mine, the result of which was that Bunn was to return to the mining district and make some further borings in the mine on the quiet, and the boys agreed to pay all the expenses of the experiment.

"We'll give the thing a fair trial, Mr. Bunn, and if nothing develops the loss will be ours," said Johnny. "If, on the contrary, you make a strike, you will advise us and I will try to arrange matters so I can take a trip out there. Then, if the things look bright, we'll consider what is the best thing to be done towards developing the property in a systematic way."

This arrangement was satisfactory to the prospector, and the next day he departed for the West.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE INK COMPANY IS REORGANIZED.

Miss Grant, whose first name was Trixy, made her appearance next day, and Johnny made her acquainted with his partner.

"I have called on several of the men on this floor who have to get their work done by outsiders from a public stenographer's office, and they have all agreed to give you a trial. Here are their names and the number of their rooms. You had better call on them and make your arrangements for doing their work."

The young lady thanked Johnny for the interest he showed in her, and then went out to call on the gentlemen the boy broker had spoken to.

She was back in half an hour with a bunch of work, and soon she was rattling the keys of her instrument in a merry way.

Johnny and Will both went out and left her in charge of the office.

"Gives an air of business to the office to hear that typewriter clicking away," said Will.

"Yes. We will probably soon have work of our own to employ her on," said his partner.

"Mighty pretty girl, isn't she?"

"Very; but no prettier than my cousin Kittie."

Will was willing to admit that, for he was a bit mashed on Miss Long, who had called a second time when Johnny was out and been entertained by him.

Both partners went to the little bank and sat down with the crowd before the blackboard.

"I see L. & M. is advancing," said Johnny. "I think we might make a few dollars on it. What do you think?"

"I think so, too."

The senior partner had brought \$10,000 in his clothes to have it on hand in case anything turned up, so he went to the margin clerk's window and bought a thousand shares of L. & M. at 90.

In the course of an hour it went up to 92.

"I guess we'd better sell before it starts in the other way, as it is likely to do any moment," said Johnny.

"Oh, hold on awhile longer. It may go up another point," said Will.

Johnny, after some demur, consented to wait, but he believed a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush.

It finally got up to 93 3-8.

Johnny wouldn't hold on any longer, and gave in the order for the sale.

Then they went to lunch, conscious that they had made \$3,000 that morning.



When they got back to the office L. & M. was quoted on the tape at 91 5-8.

"We were lucky to get out in time. If I had held on too long we wouldn't have made more than half as much," said Johnny.

"We're a lucky Wall Street firm, so we're bound to come out at the top of the heap," replied Will, in a confident tone.

"That's all right; but it won't do to bank too much on our luck. It might go back on us when we didn't expect it."

Miss Grant stopped work, put on her hat and went out to lunch.

While she was out the boys had some more talk on the subject of the Invisible Ink Co., which they were now prepared to push as soon as Johnny had called on the other four stockholders.

"You go up and see Fenton this afternoon, Will. He's making another supply of the ink. Tell him that matters are coming to a focus and that we expect to start in making the ink for the trade in a few days. Tell him to come down and see us Saturday noon," said Johnny.

"All right. I might as well go up now, as I have nothing else on hand."

Johnny called on the other four stockholders that afternoon, and bought their shares for \$59 each.

That left Stevenson the only one of the six in the company.

Long & Co. now owned 35,000 shares of the stock.

Johnny decided to call on Stevenson again and give him what he asked.

He didn't care to have the broker reap any benefit that might accrue at the expense of the other traders.

He called on him next morning, which happened to be Saturday.

This second visit excited Stevenson's suspicions that there was something in the wind concerning the company, and he raised his price to \$500.

"I guess you'll have to keep the stock, sir," said Johnny. "At the present moment it isn't worth the paper it's written on."

"If it isn't why are you willing to give \$100 for it?" asked the trader.

"Because my firm is trying to reorganize the company and finance it. Now you have refused to put up any more money, consequently I judge you have no interest in its reorganization. If you have no interest in it it's your place to get out. I have bought out all the other gentlemen at something less than \$50 apiece. I have concluded to come up to your original offer in order to make a clean sweep. If the company doesn't go, why my firm will be the loser, so you see it would be ridiculous to expect us to pay you a fancy price for stock that has no actual value."

"That stock cost me \$1,250," said Stevenson.

"I know it did. The other gentlemen paid the same as you, and yet they are glad to get out of the company and give us the chance to see what we can make out of it. If you are going to stay in you will be notified to attend a meeting to be held for reorganization purposes next week. Then it will be decided by vote how the company is to be financed."

"I thought you said you were going to finance it?"

"If we secure your shares my firm will finance the company, otherwise we won't, unless you put up your proportion."

"I won't put another cent in it," said Stevenson, forcibly.

"And you won't sell your stock for \$100?"

"Suppose I won't, what then?"

"In that case my firm will foreclose its lien on the plant and patent and buy it in. The company will then have no visible assets. We will lose the \$225 we have paid for the stock, and you will be out \$100," said Johnny, in a tone that showed he was in earnest.

"What do I care for \$100!" said the broker.

"Not much, I guess. So much the more reason why you should get out of the company and give Fenton and ourselves the chance to see what we can do with it."

"What do you think you can do with it?"

"We think that in time we may be able to build a business up."

"In time, eh?" said the broker, thumbing on his desk.

"Give me the \$100 and you can take the stock."

The deal was made and Johnny went away satisfied.

About noon Fenton turned up at the office, and Johnny outlined his plans to him.

"You have no objection to our firm taking the control of the company, Fenton? You will still have 45,000 shares."

"Whatever you propose goes with me," replied the man.

"All right. You are still the president, and in that capacity I wish you to sign this typewritten notice for a meeting of the present stockholders, to take place at this office on Monday at five o'clock, p.m."

"All right," said Fenton, and he signed it.

"We will reorganize with five stockholders. You, my partner, and I, my uncle and Mr. Waters, senior. This room will be the company's executive office hereafter, and its name will appear on the door. The factory will remain where it is for the present, under your charge. Anything to suggest?"

The ink man shook his head.

"That will be all then. Be on hand Monday afternoon at five."

On Monday afternoon the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. was duly reorganized.

Johnny was elected president; Fenton, vice-president, and Will Waters, secretary and treasurer.

Long & Co. bought the 14,000 unsold shares at ten cents a share, and deducted the \$100 the firm had previously advanced, so as to remove the lien from the plant.

The company then resumed business on a capital of \$1,300.

Fenton reported a supply of ink on hand, and Johnny instructed him to visit the wholesale stationery houses and make the best arrangements he could for putting the ink on the market.

Will was directed to insert advertisements in the trade journals identified with the stationery business, and to order whatever printing was necessary.

Other matters were attended to and the meeting adjourned.

Next day the name of the Imperial Invisible Ink Co. was painted on the door.

Thus the reorganized corporation was started on its new career.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE LITTLE GIANT PROVES A WINNER.

A few days later Johnny was told by a political friend in the Bronx to buy Telephone stock, as the Board of Aldermen were going to grant the corporation certain new



privileges that were bound to send the stock up several points.

Johnny took the pointer and the next day visited the little bank and gave in an order for 2,000 shares.

At the next meeting of the aldermen the telephone question, which had been hanging fire for weeks, was settled in the company's favor and telephone stock at once jumped up ten points.

Johnny sold out when he saw that it was not likely to go much higher, and the lucky firm of boy brokers added \$20,000 more to their capital.

Miss Grant was doing pretty well at her new line of business, and her presence in the office was a considerable help to the boys.

They had a small amount of typewriting to be done every day themselves, and this was pretty certain to increase as time went on.

Johnny got a letter from the prospector containing a full report of what he had accomplished in a week's steady work.

So far he had struck no indication of the ledge he was after.

He had found a good bit of low grade ore, which, of itself, was not sufficient for them to build any hopes on.

He said he had just shipped a box full of it to the firm by express, and they might expect to receive it in a few days.

They could send a part of it to the assay office on Wall Street and get a report upon it.

Three days later the box arrived, and was delivered at the office.

Johnny opened it, and he and Will looked at the top specimens.

They were no judges of ore from the looks of the rock, so they were unable to pass an opinion on it.

"We'll send half of it around to the assay office," said Johnny, letting the cover drop. "Go down and see if the janitor has a suitable kind of box to put it in."

Will went to the basement, got a box about the size he wanted, and brought it upstairs.

He and Johnny filled it with ore from the big box.

While they were doing it they noticed a black powdery substance in the large box and Will asked what it was.

"I'll never tell you," replied Johnny. "I suppose it's some of the dirt from the mine."

He shut the cover down and pushed the small box aside, to be later carried to the assay office up the street.

Just then Broker Howard came in to see them.

Johnny showed him some of the ore specimens, and told him they came from a mine out West the firm was interested in.

"Gone into the mining business, too, eh?" laughed Howard. "You boys are getting to be promoters as well as brokers."

"We are ready to take up with anything there is money in," replied Will.

"What is this ink company, the name of which you have on your door?"

Johnny started to tell him that it was a corporation the firm held a controlling interest in, when the broker suddenly stopped him.

"There's a strange odor in this room," he said, sniffing the air. "Smells as if something of a disagreeable nature was burning."

"I've noticed it for the last minute or two," said Will.

"That's so," admitted Johnny. "There is a strange smell about the office. I wonder where it comes from?"

"It seems to come from that box," spoke up Trixy, pointing at the big one that had come from the West.

Johnny looked at the box a moment, and then threw up the cover.

A cloud of stifling smoke arose, like a balloon, out of it. "Great Scott!" exclaimed Johnny. "What is this?"

The others in the room started back aghast.

Trixy jumped from her chair and ran for the door, while Mr. Howard ducked like a person who thought something was going to fly at him.

The bunch of smoke rose to the ceiling and spread itself out there.

No more of it came out of the box, nor could Johnny see any evidence of fire in it.

The box appeared to be just as it was before the strange vapor generated in it.

"That beats the Dutch!" said Johnny, looking down in a puzzled way.

Will and Broker Howard ventured to draw near, while Trixy recovered from her momentary alarm and returned to her work.

The smell hung in and around the box, but the boys noticed that the powdery substance they had seen in among the ore had disappeared.

After canvassing the matter it was finally decided that the powdery stuff had been some chemical substance that existed in the mine, and that it was subject to spontaneous combustion under certain unexplained circumstances.

The door and window were thrown open to air the office, and soon the peculiar incident was forgotten.

Shortly after Howard took his departure a telegram from the prospector was delivered at the office.

It was very brief and read as follows:

"Eureka. Letter on way. JAMES BUNN."

"That must mean he has found the ledge of ore," said Johnny.

"If he has, we are lucky for fair," replied Will. "Shake on it."

And they shook hands in anticipation of their prospective luck.

While they were talking, Fenton came in to make his daily report.

He had got the more important wholesale stationers to handle the ink after he had demonstrated its particular virtues, and as he had cleaned out all his stock in hand he wanted money to buy a supply of the raw material, bottles, etc., so that he continue the manufacture of the ink.

Will provided him with the necessary cash, and then he said he would have to hire a boy to help him at the plant.

"Hire one, then," said Johnny. "You need not ask our permission to do that. You're in charge of the factory. It's up to you to turn out the amount of ink the orders call for, and you must see that you have enough on hand to fill them as they come in. Send a duplicate of all bills here, and we will do the bookkeeping. We have a young lady here who needs work, and we want to keep her employed."

Fenton said he'd keep things straight and then went away.

Two days later the letter from Bunn arrived.

This conveyed the news of the strike, with all the details.

"Our fortune is made," he said. "Come out at once and let me show you the lode. How high the ore will assay I can't say, but from my experience in the mines



I should say that we have as good ore as any of the big producers around us. As you boys are equal partners with me I deem it best not to make a move till you come out here and we have talked our plans over. Let your partner buy up any Little Giant stock he can find. He ought to get it for a song. Bring money with you so that we can gather in whatever is to be found out here. The company will have to be reorganized, of course, as the old officers are all out of it. There are no big stockholders to be dickered with. The 100,000 shares which are out are all held by small holders, and we will have to advertise for it in a quiet way. As soon as we have secured the bulk of it we will give out the news, and then there will be a rush to buy stock."

There was much more in the letter, but there is no need to repeat it here.

Johnny and Will were jubilant.

Fortune was certainly smiling on them at a great rate.

Long & Co. was undoubtedly a lucky Wall Street firm.

"You'll go out, of course," said Will.

"Sure I will. I shall start right away, that is, by tomorrow morning. Now let us make a tour of the Curb brokers' offices and see if we can pick up any of the Little Giant shares."

The boy brokers devoted a good part of the day to hunting for the stock and they landed 25,000 shares at something less than a cent a share.

Next morning at ten, Johnny boarded a fast express for the West, and in due time reached the wonderful new city of Goldfield.

Johnny had long been interested in this town, which had sprung up like magic in the amphitheater of a dead volcano, whose bones are broken and mingled with the desert sands.

He was not surprised to find it looking like a modern, up-to-date little city, for he had seen pictures of its buildings, and had read about its water system, its sewer system, its railroad system with trains of sleeping-cars arriving daily, and its electric light and power system.

How different from the old-time mining camps of rude tents and one-story shanties along a single street!

But the Little Giant mine was some distance from Goldfield.

It was situated in Paradise, miles out on the desert.

It was easy to get there nowadays by means of high-power automobile stages from Goldfield, and after a brief stay at this town, Johnny took passage for his destination.

Telegraph and telephone wires connected Paradise with Goldfield and so the boy broker was able to inform Prospector Bunn of his coming.

The mining man was on hand to meet him and give him a royal welcome.

Johnny registered at the best hotel and after dining with Bunn they drove out to the mine in the rig that belonged to the company.

The afternoon was spent on the property, and for the first time in his life the New York boy found himself in the tunnel of a real mine, and had the pleasure of inspecting a rich lode of gold ore.

"If that vein runs the entire length of the claims which make up this property the mine is worth a million as it stands," says Bunn.

After supper they went to Johnny's room and had another talk about their plans for the development of the property.

It was arranged that the company should be reorganized as soon as they had acquired all the outstanding shares in sight.

"The other holders will come in for the cream with us," said the prospector. "The fewer there are of them the better for all hands."

Brokers in Paradise and Goldfield received orders to buy in the stock, and at the end of a week 30,000 shares had been secured at a cent a share.

Several small holders in Paradise were called on to help put the reorganization through, being informed in confidence that the Little Giant had developed sure indications of gold.

Johnny was elected president; Bunn, vice-president and general manager, and Will Waters secretary-treasurer.

The main office was to be located in New York City.

All transfers of stock were to be made at both Paradise and New York, and an assistant secretary was elected to look after the Paradise end.

When everything was ready the news of the discovery of the golden lode was given out, and created great excitement in the district.

Application was made at the Goldfield Exchange to have the stock re-listed, and this was accomplished before Johnny started back East.

There was a big demand for stock, and an issue of 50,000 shares was sold like hot-cakes at 25 cents later on.

This money was used for purchasing the necessary machinery and paying for the labor to start the ball rolling.

Fifty thousand more shares were afterward sold at 35 cents, which made 145,000 shares held by outsiders.

Johnny and his partner held 155,000 and Bunn 100,000 shares between them, which, of course, gave the three the complete control of the mine.

Thus another bonehead security had turned up trumps for the boys.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCLUSION.

Johnny returned to New York as fast as a swift train could get him there.

When he turned up at the office he found that Will had had the name of the Little Giant Mining and Milling Co. painted on the door.

When the news was circulated of the strike in the mine the Curb brokers began looking for the stock, but none was to be had, for Will had captured every share in sight.

Brokers on the sixth floor, when they saw the name put on the door of Long & Co., trooped in to make inquiries for the stock.

Will had none to sell then.

Johnny brought a lot of certificates with him.

They now had plenty of work for Trixy Grant, between the mine, and the ink company and their growing brokerage business, and she had to give up the bulk of her outside business to another girl that Johnny got to do the work so as not to incommode the men who had patronized her when she needed work.

"We'll soon have to get a bigger office, Johnny," said Will.

"We'll put in an application with the superintendent of the building for the first vacant suite on this floor, or the one above or below," said his partner.

Johnny found that the ink business was doing fine, and that Fenton had to hire a second assistant to keep up with the orders.

The boy brokers now came into some prominence in Wall Street.



It was soon known that they were largely interested in the Little Giant, for the Curb traders saw that Johnny was president of the company, and Will was the secretary-treasurer.

Every one wondered how they had got hold of the mine.

Broker Watt cleared the mystery up by circulating the news concerning how they had acquired 100,000 shares owned by the deceased Mr. Jackson.

One big daily considered the fact worthy of publication, and devoted a whole page in its Sunday magazine section of the story of the rise of the boy firm.

That proved a big advertisement for the lads, and brought them many customers to their brokerage business.

Johnny arranged with Broker Howard to transact for them all their Stock Exchange orders, and a friendly Curb trader made it an object for them to throw their mining orders into his hands.

When he got old enough, Johnny intended to become a member of the Curb Exchange himself, and look after his own business.

Summer had come around, and one day Johnny suggested to Will that they visit Farmer Seth Harker over Sunday.

Will agreed and the farmer was informed by letter that they were coming out to his place on the following Saturday afternoon.

When they alighted from the train at Sayville, a small country town, the farmer was on hand in his light wagon.

He gave them a rousing welcome.

"Gosh! Yew chaps hev got to be real high muck-a-mucks!" he said, enthusiastically. "I read about yew in the paper. It said that yew own a gold mine out West, and an invisible ink company in York, and that yew are comers from Comersville. Dern my suspenders! Ef it ain't a big honor to know yew. My old woman is perkin' herself up in honor of yew're comin', and Cyrus, he's quit work to put on a b'iled shirt and a new suit of store clothes he's jest bought. By gum! I wish I'd hired the taown band to play a toone when yer come off the car. Jump in, and I'll hev yew aout to the farm in no time at all."

When Johnny and Will reached the farm they found several city boarders there.

These people looked at them with curiosity and respect, for the farmer and his wife had given the boys a big reputation, and asserted that they were worth a raft of money.

Naturally, the boy brokers found themselves the "lions" of the occasion.

Mrs. Seth Harker declared she was proud to entertain them, and she hoped they would overlook any shortcomings about the farm.

Cyrus grinned like a hyena when he was presented to them, and didn't know what to say.

He had on his Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes, and he acted as if they felt strange to him.

The boys had a bang-up time during their brief visit, and left for the city on the early Monday morning train.

Business was dull during the hot months in Wall Street, but the weather did not materially interfere with the firm's business enterprises.

The receipts of the ink company were largely put into advertising.

Nobody drew any money out of the concern but Fenton, who needed it to live on.

It was marked up against him, to be eventually deducted from his dividends.

Work went on at the Little Giant mine in great shape, but no ore was shipped until the fall.

Before that Will paid a visit to Paradise and saw the mine in busy operation.

Bags of ore were stacked up in tiers, like a military fortification, when he got there, and Bunn explained that this would all be shipped to the smelter later.

Will visited the principal mines in the vicinity and saw that most of them were being worked by leasing companies, which were making large profits.

He returned to New York, well pleased with his trip to southwestern Nevada.

"I wonder if any more of our boneheads will turn out lucky?" Will asked his partner the day after his return.

"We won't count on any more doing so," replied Johnny. "I think we've made ten-strikes enough out of the contents of that safe. The auctioneer made no error when he said there might be a fortune in it, though he only spoke in jest."

Trixy Grant was now bookkeeper as well as stenographer for the firm.

She counted it a lucky day that she dropped in at the office looking for a position.

Not only was she now receiving good wages, but she and Johnny were keeping company, and there was no doubt that some day in the future she would become the mistress of a fine house, as the wife of the senior partner of the firm.

Will was calling regularly on Kittie Long, and the chances were the two would also make a match of it.

Both of the boy brokers were fine matrimonial catches, and the girls considered themselves lucky in catching on.

The Imperial Invisible Ink Co. did an increasing business all winter and spring, and at the regular annual meeting of the reorganized company a dividend of two per cent. was declared on the capital stock.

As Long & Co. held 52,000 shares, their shares amounted to \$1,040.

That left them still \$600 behind in cash, but as they valued their interest at about \$15,000, they were actually away ahead of the game.

Fenton received \$900, less \$400 advanced to him, while Johnny's uncle and Will's father got \$20 each, which was clear gain, as their stock hadn't cost them a cent.

When summer came again the Little Giant was paying regular quarterly dividends of 2 1-2 per cent., or at the rate of 10 per cent. a year on its capital stock, and the boy brokers, as well as the prospector, were making a good thing out of it.

It is panning out much better to-day, and Long & Co. is generally admitted to be a lucky Wall Street firm.

Next week's issue will contain "IN THE DIAMOND FIELDS; OR, THE BOY WHO MADE A GREAT FIND."

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# THE TEN DOCTORS

## OR

### TWENTY YEARS IN SEARCH OF A DIAMOND

By PAUL BRADDON

(CHAPTER XXIII—Continued)

"How old is this young lady, madame?"

"Between nineteen and twenty years, sir; she is the twin sister of the boy, if he is, as I suspect, my son."

The detective remained for a few moments lost in thought.

"Madame," he said, presently, "dismiss all doubts from your mind; this boy is your son."

"My son? Are you sure of what you say? Do not deceive me; you little know what hangs upon your words."

"My words are true, Felicie de la Roche!" exclaimed the detective in his natural voice, which until now he had concealed. "The boy is your son—and mine! Behold, false woman, your husband, Dominique de la Roche!"

With one quick movement of his hand he pulled off his false hair and mustache, and dashed his green spectacles to the floor.

Dominick the Detective, as he really was, stood revealed.

The woman gazed at him with staring eyes. His face assumed a chalky hue.

"What do you want?" she gasped, seizing a chair and steadying herself with one hand upon it. "My life?—which you tried to take from me in the underground vault? I am at your mercy—speak!"

"I want not your life, woman!" he said, sternly. "In a moment of rage I would have killed you, but heaven mercifully saved me from that crime, if crime it would have been, to kill so vile a thing as you! No, woman! keep your wretched life, but give me back our child! My boy—the very knowledge of whose existence you have concealed from me through these long years!"

"I shall not seek to control him now," she slowly replied. "He is yours—take him."

"Take him! Woman, do not mock me! Speak! Where is our son?"

"Where? You should know; at his usual work, I suppose."

"The boy is gone—stolen away, and, as there is One above us, I believe this to be more of your devilish work! First my son, then my daughter! Woman, beware! I hold you in the hollow of my hand! I demand those children!"

Madame Renaud turned even more deathly pale than before.

"Dom," she replied, with an effort, "I am wicked, I know, but not as bad as you think me. Much as I have wronged you, I would never have harmed so much as one hair on the head of your children. There is some devil's work on foot, but it is not mine—it is that of your cousin, Marius Burk."

Her much wronged husband gazed sternly upon her.

"Do you speak the truth?" he demanded.

"I do!" was the firm reply. "You must soon know all, and attempted concealment would be useless. Of Charley—our little Gaspard—I know absolutely nothing, except that he left here last night, alive and well. Marius Burk seeks his life—he rehearsed this whole matter last night in this very room, and it was agreed that Pauline should marry his son. I now

believe that she overheard him, for this morning she had fled!"

"Oh, Dom!" she cried, bursting into an agony of tears, "I have wronged you—bitterly wronged you, and dare not even ask your forgiveness; but I love my children! Save them, and then deal with me as you will! Save my little boy, who has been so long lost to me, and I will fall down and worship you!"

She fairly groveled at his feet, she wept and she implored, she kissed the very ground on which he stood.

"Rise, woman," he said, at length. "For your sake I do nothing. For the sake of our children, I would move mountains, were it possible."

"Have no fears. I believe you speak the truth. Our children, I believe, still live. They must and shall be saved."

\* \* \* \* \*

Let us now return to our young friend, Charley Evringham, whom we left in the hands of Bill Leary, on board the old canal boat, aground on the Jersey meadows.

The boy's recognition of his identity did not appear to surprise the ruffian in the least.

"So ye remember me," he said. "Ye always was a smart lad, so ye wur."

"I remember you only too well, for many a beating I've received at your hands."

"Well, so ye did, an' ye deserved them all! Do ye remember old Bridget?"

"Well!"

"Do ye now? She's dead this three year, rest her soul!"

Charley thought to himself, as he recalled the woman and her character, that it was improbable that heaven would do anything of the sort, if the doctrine of future punishment and reward was of any truth, but unwilling to anger the man he remained silent.

"I knew ye," continued Bill Leary, "the very first minute I clapped me two eyes on ye. Do ye mind the night you came here first with Doctor 94? Oh, it was the devil's own time ye had been having thin! I knew ye at wanst, and says I to meself, says I: 'Bill, me boy, it's a pretty penny ye could turn on that fine lad, if ye so have a mind.'"

"And yet I am the friend of Doctor 94!" cried Charley, "and you swore on that very night to protect him, and all that were friends to him."

"Yes, an' I've sworn many things more in me time. But niver mind that now. Let the Tin Doctors take care of themselves, and I'll take care of meself. Whist now! No more of this! I must be off; but Mike here will stay by and keep you company should you be lonely."

Charley, not knowing what to say, remained silent.

"Ye bid fair to stop here a bit!" continued Bill, "so ye had best make yourself at home."

His bonds were then removed, and seeing no opportunity to escape, Charley determined to follow this advice, and throw-

(Continued on page 31)



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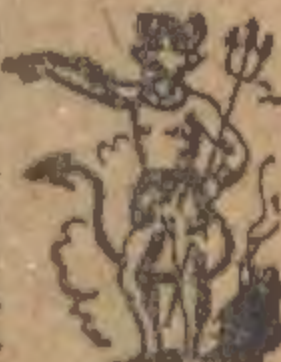
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(Continued from page 28.)

ing himself in one of the bunks which lined the sides of the little cabin, youth soon asserted itself, and despite the perilous situation in which the boy was placed, he fell asleep.

When Charley awoke, day light filled the little cabin.

He looked about him, hardly understanding where he was.

The sight of the man Mike, however, who was in the act of lighting a fire in the stove, recalled to his mind the events of the past night, and he quickly sprang to his feet.

"Halloa, boy!" exclaimed the man at the stove; "so you've waked up, have you? How do you feel?"

"I feel well enough," replied Charley, shortly, "but I want to get out of this place right now."

"Oh, you do, do you!" exclaimed the man, with a rough laugh; won't you stop to breakfast? I'll have it ready in fifteen minutes."

"Why did you bring me here?"

"Don't know—ask Bill Leary."

"Where is he?"

"Gone back to New York."

"Am I to be kept a prisoner here by you?"

"That's what I'm hired for."

"But why should Leary wish to detain me?"

"Give it up! Ask me something easy?"

"See here, my lad," he continued, laying down the wood which he still held in his hand. "Let us understand each other, once and for all. I am paid to keep you here, and I shall keep you, and don't you make any blooming error."

"Look at me! I'm only a poor old bum—a Bowery beat ten years ago—a tomato-can-filling tramp now, and money's an object to me!"

"Now, I don't know what racket Bill is working, and I don't care; but you've got to stay quiet, where you are, so make no mistake."

After thus delivering himself, Mike resumed his occupation of fire-building, and declined further conversation by making no reply whatever to Charley's further questions.

Seeing that there was nothing to be gained in this manner, the boy adjusted his clothes, which he had not removed when he lay down, and went up the narrow ladder on deck.

The man made no effort to prevent him.

The reason for this was evident, for on reaching the deck, Charley quickly discovered that escape without a boat was simply impossible.

On every hand there stretched a wilderness of reeds, almost as far as the eye could reach.

The old canal-boat, which at the time of the boy's first visit had been fast bound in the ice, now lay imbedded in the muddy bottom of a little creek, whose sluggish waters emptied into the bay beyond.

The prospect was certainly not an encouraging one, but Charley Evringham was not the boy to despair.

He turned and went into the cabin, and assisted old Mike to prepare the morning meal.

Five days dragged out their weary length, and still no help came.

Twice they were visited by Bill Leary, but all his entreaties to be allowed to depart failed to move that individual an iota.

The creek was out of any of the regular courses traveled by the few small boats which occasionally passed through the swampy meadows.

Its position was, therefore, well chosen, for, save Bill Leary and the old tramp, his jailer, the boy saw nobody.

With the latter he had become quite friendly, but he failed to prevail upon him to aid in his escape.

In fact, this would have been a difficult matter for him to do, as there was no small boat, save the one in which Bill Leary came and went, and had not the canal-boat been well

stocked with provisions, to which store Bill added at each visit, it might have been a serious matter for both had that individual neglected to put in an appearance.

This state of things by no means suited Mike the Bum, and he so informed Leary, and insisted that a boat be provided for his use in case of necessity.

To this Charley's jailer reluctantly consented, and at the time of a third visit brought with him a little skiff, which was moored under the canal-boat's bow.

"Make one move toward it," said Mike to his prisoner, "and you'll find a bullet in your back before you can count three!"

Under these considerations Charley concluded to leave the boat alone.

One morning, about a week after his capture, Charley arose, and dressing himself, went out on deck, as usual.

To his surprise, Mike the Bum was nowhere to be seen.

He looked over the side of the old canaler, and saw, to his further astonishment, that the skiff, which had been kept securely chained under the bow for the use of that gentleman, had likewise disappeared.

The morning passed, the afternoon came and went, but still no one appeared.

The shadows of night were just commencing to fall, when Charley, who was seated in the little cabin, was startled by a cry:

"Canal-boat, ahoy!"

He ran to the deck, and looked over the side.

A small boat had just made fast.

"Is that you, Mike?" he asked, peering down in the gathering darkness.

It was not Mr. Mike the Bum.

Instead of that distinguished individual, a man apparently of great age stood up in the boat; in the stern-sheets sat a boy.

"Lend us a hand!" cried the latter, in a sweet, musical voice. "We have come to save you."

Charley stretched out his hand, and, grasping that of the speaker, pulled him on deck.

He cast one glance at the face of his visitor, and then drew back in amazement.

The boy who had come aboard the old canaler was his second self—his very double in every particular.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

Let us now return to Pauline, whom we left in the act of accompanying the singular old man she had so strangely encountered to his home.

The poor girl was desperate and utterly regardless of results, otherwise she would probably never have made so rash a move.

Threatened as she was with a forced marriage with a man whom she abhorred, she felt that any fate would be preferable.

She had, therefore, determined to accompany the old man to his home, and follow up this adventure to the very end.

Through many streets they wandered, now turning in this direction and now in that, until at length her guide came to a halt before an old tumble-down frame house, and pointing to the windows above a little store which occupied the first story, said:

"There, boy, that is where I live. Will you come and be my boy?"

"I will come," replied the girl. "I promised you that before, you know, but why do you call me boy? I am not a boy! Don't you see how I am dressed?"

The old man surveyed her with a bewildered air.

"You are dressed wrong," he said. "All wrong! You have the eyes, you have the hair, you have the features of my boy



—my little Dominique, who was taken from me by that bad woman, and yet you are dressed like a girl—tell me, why do you do it?”

“Why do I do what?”

“Wear those clothes.”

“They are my clothes.”

“They ought not to be, for they are girl’s clothes, and you are a boy!”

Why not humor the old man in his insane fancy, and change her dress for that of a boy.

Surely she would be safe from observation then.

“It’s all a mistake, grandfather,” she said. “Come, let us go to your home, and I will put on different clothes at once.”

“So you shall—so you shall!” exclaimed the old Frenchman, clapping his hands with all the enjoyment of a child, and leading the way up a flight of narrow stairs, he opened a door and ushered Pauline into his apartments.

They comprised four rooms, occupying an entire floor.

They were filled with a heterogeneous mass of furniture, curiosities, bric-a-brac and old traps of every kind.

The fact was, the old man, who unquestionably had in some manner provided himself with means, had long been in the habit of haunting the furniture auction-rooms and buying whatever struck his fancy.

He carefully shut and locked the door.

“See my clocks!” he cried, taking Pauline by the hand, and drawing her toward one of them.

“They all strike at once!”

“Ding! ding!”

“Sping! sping!”

“Oh, I love to hear their merry bells!”

“But, come!” he continued, leading the way to one of the other apartments, “this is your room. I’ve kept it ready and waiting for you for a long while, for I knew you’d come at last. You’ll find everything there—clothes, books, everything I thought you would like that I saw, I bought and put in there till you came. There is everything you can want.”

He threw open the door as he spoke, and Pauline saw, to her surprise, that the room was superbly furnished with everything pertaining to the wants of a young man.

Old Frenchy had thus prepared it years before, and so it had stood, waiting for the son he always expected, but who never came.

“Now that you have come home,” he said, “we will both be happy once more. See, here are your clothes—put them on, for I want to see you dressed as you used to be!”

Upon the next day the neighbors, who had grown so indifferent to old Frenchy, were surprised to learn that he had in his apartments a boy.

He was a bright, black-eyed youth of nineteen or twenty years, and some said bore a strong resemblance to the old man himself.

For several days they came and went together, exciting general observation.

There was a romantic strangeness about the whole affair, which, in her present frame of mind, suited Pauline exactly.

One, two, three, four, five days passed.

Pauline had grown quite accustomed to her new mode of life.

As for old Frenchy, he seemed actually to have grown young again.

He laughed and joked and prattled to her like a little child.

It was evident that his mind was hopelessly gone, for he talked to her of things that had happened years before as though they had transpired but yesterday.

“I haven’t shown you my diamond yet!” he said on the morning of the fifth day, as they sat at breakfast.

The one idea! His diamond—always his diamond.

“No, and you promised me you would, you know,” replied Pauline, who supposed the diamond to exist only in his imagination, although the allusions she had heard to a diamond in the conversation between Dr. Burk and her mother sometimes puzzled her when she thought of them in connection with the old man’s rambling talk.

“I will, I will!” he cried, laughing childishly. “To-morrow—not to-day. I always put off showing my diamond until to-morrow, and to-morrow never comes. But look! you shall see this now! Behold something rare—a work of art!”

From some mysterious pocket about his person he produced an article which he held aloft to the gaze of his astonished companion.

It was the jeweled collar which had been stolen from her mother’s neck on the night of the French ball.

“Where did you get that?” cried the girl.

“Oh, I found it! I found it!” laughed the old man.

“It is mine; they took it from me with the rest, but I saw it one night at the French ball—I always attend the French ball—on the neck of a masked beauty. Who was she? Do you know? I didn’t, but I took my own! See it sparkle! See it shine!”

As he held it above his head the gems glittered and flashed in the morning sun.

At that instant there came a thundering rap at the door.

“Who is there?” cried the old man, hastily hiding the jeweled collar about his person, and shuffling to the door.

Before he could reach it, however, it was burst violently open, and a man, ragged and dirty and very much intoxicated staggered into the room.

“Hello! old billy-goat,” he cried, in thick, drunken tones, “you look like the goat in a bock beer sign in a Fourth Ward saloon! Who the devil are you? Guess I’m in the wrong pen—I want Bill Leary, I do; does he live in here?”

“Monsieur Leary lives three doors below,” replied the old Frenchman, with some assumption of dignity. “Leave my room at once!”

“You don’t say!” replied the intruder. “Must have got the wrong number; but don’t tell me to get out of your room or I’ll punch the whole head off of you. I’m Mike, the Bum, an’ don’t you forget it! an’ I used to be the terror of the Fourth Ward, if I am played out now.”

“Leave my room! leave my room!” cried old Frenchy.

“Oh, you go to blazes. Good Heaven, who is this?”

The man had suddenly straightened up, and with his hands pressed to his head was staring with all his might at Pauline.

“It’s my son!” cried the old Frenchman. “Leave my room, I say!”

“Your son! Do you mean to tell me, young man, that I haven’t been keeping guard over you on that cursed old canal-er down on the Jersey meadows for the last week, in the pay of that scoundrel, Bill Leary?”

“I certainly haven’t been in any such place,” replied Pauline. “Prisoner—canaler? What do you mean?”

“I mean that you are Charley Evringham, that I left a prisoner on the old canal-boat this morning, or else you are his ghost. Though how the deuce you got here is more than I can tell.”

Now, Pauline knew nothing of Charley’s disappearance, but her native shrewdness showed her at once that something was wrong here, and drunk as the man was, his wild statements had some meaning.

Charley Evringham a prisoner!

What could it mean?

(This story to be continued in our next issue.)